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5/02

How Big Was It?

Dramatic Husker rally ends one streak, could lead to bigger and better things



Brian Hill

ANOTHER STREAK is over, and finally, it's a good thing.

The team that couldn't win on the road did for the first time in six tries, overcoming more than a little adversity along the way.

And the most impressive part of the dramatic victory was the rally from a 17-point deficit by a team that many said couldn't come from behind.

This game looked to be following an all-too-familiar pattern, when a Jammal Lord fumble bounced right into the hands of Texas A&M cornerback Byron Jones, who raced 66 yards for a touchdown to put the Aggies on top 31-14 midway through the third quarter.

But the Huskers showed remarkable resiliency this time by quickly striking back with a 68-yard drive in just three plays to begin the improbable comeback.

On its next possession, Nebraska went 81 yards in 13 plays, including two crucial fourth-down conversions, one deep in its own territory despite a poor spot.

The team that has had so many bad things happen this year got a huge break on the go-ahead scoring drive. The Aggies knocked the football loose from I-back Dahrnan Diedrick, but center John Garrison managed to recover at the A&M 12.

The Huskers took a 38-31 lead with 3:55 remaining but needed one last save when the Aggies drove to the NU 9,

before safety Philip Bland intercepted in the end zone with 2:23 remaining.

The amazing 24-0 turnaround by a team left for dead suddenly changes a number of things.

At 6-3 with four games remaining, including 2-7 Kansas, Nebraska now looks like a lock to at least finish with a winning record and extend its NCAA-best streak of 33 straight bowl games. More than a few people were doubting either of those would happen after the loss at Oklahoma State a week ago.

And finally getting an impressive road win should do wonders for the Huskers' confidence heading into a meeting with 7-1 and seventh-ranked Texas back in the friendly confines of Memorial Stadium, where they have won a nation-leading 26 straight games.

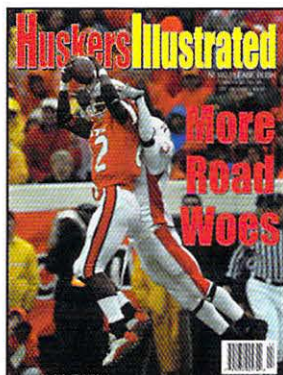
The home winning streak, which started after a loss to the Longhorns in 1998, is the subject of our feature story in this week's

Huskers Illustrated. That loss ended a 47-game streak for the Huskers, who have won a remarkable 73 of their last 74 in Lincoln.

The subject of this week's player profile is Texas product Demorrio Williams, a junior college transfer who is among Nebraska's leading tacklers. Our series on assistant coaches wraps up with a look at secondary coach George Darlington, the dean of the Husker staff in his 30th year.

Darlington has now been a part of 303 victories as a member of the NU coaching staff, and the latest win had to be extremely satisfying to him and the entire staff, which has taken a great deal of heat for the three losses in this uncharacteristic season.

It's only one victory, and more difficult challenges lie ahead. But getting out of the fog in College Station with a W should lead to clearer sailing ahead. ■



ON THE COVER

Nebraska I-back David Horne crosses the goal line on the third of his four touchdowns. The 11-yard scoring run cut Texas A&M's lead to 31-28. Photo by Derek Lippincott

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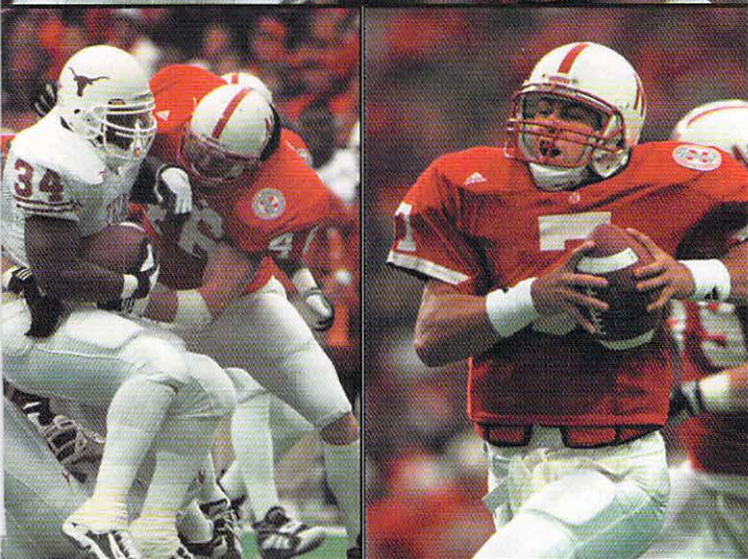
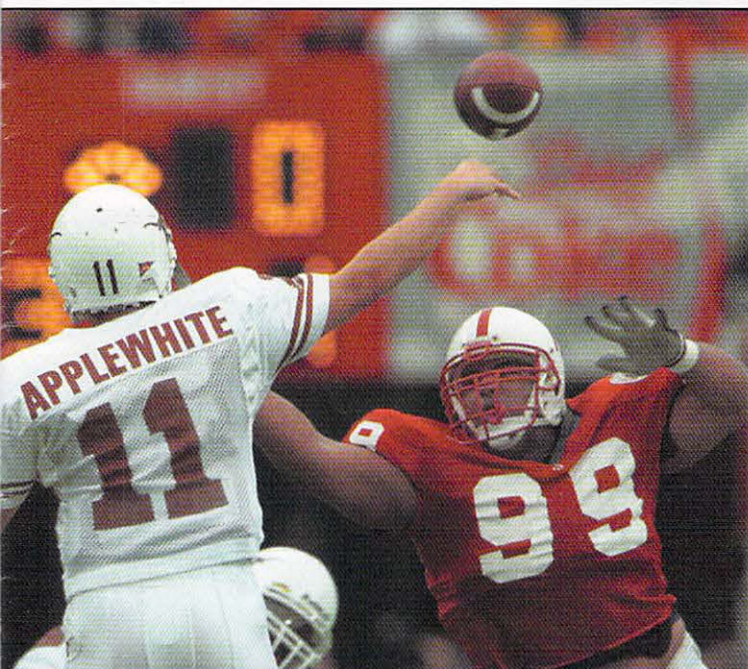
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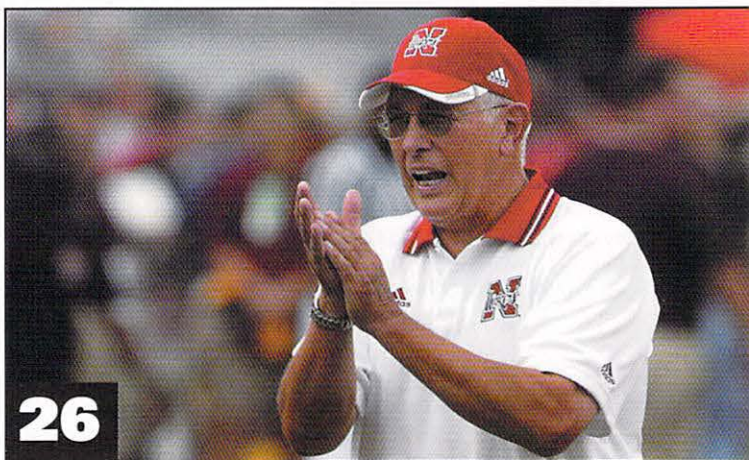
Nebraska's 26-game home winning streak will be on the line when it plays host to Texas, which was the last visiting team to win at Memorial Stadium. *By Mike Babcock*

NEXT ISSUE

The Texas review/Kansas preview issue will be mailed Monday, Nov. 4. Check for updates at huskersillustrated.com.

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26 Coach's Corner

George Darlington liked what he saw from the football team of a high school a couple of blocks from where he grew up in West Virginia. *By Mike Babcock*

Part of the Family

When Nebraska's offensive linemen were criticized earlier this season, Milt Tenopir was quick to jump to their defense, in no uncertain terms. "I've heard that crap, too, that they're going to fold up," he told the Lincoln Journal Star. "They're here to get better and try to win ballgames."

As with most coaches, Tenopir can ignore criticism directed at him. But when those who play for him are criticized, he takes it personally. "I've always gone to bat for my guys," he said recently. "I've always supported them. And I will always support them. I've always felt they were a part of me and my family. There aren't many linemen over the years that don't know my family, too."

Establishing such a relationship can be difficult because "there's always a separation from who's running the show and who's playing," he said. "But I still think you can have respect and still be friends. You can be stern and still be friendly, I guess is what I'm trying to say."

"The kids know when I'm angry, when I'm disappointed in not getting things across."

The responsibility isn't always a player's. "I look at it sometimes when a kid screws up that maybe I didn't cover something enough," he said. "Maybe I didn't have enough repetition."

Repetition during practice at every position is among the keys to Nebraska's success. And it's especially true for offensive linemen, who rarely are ready to play without redshirting.

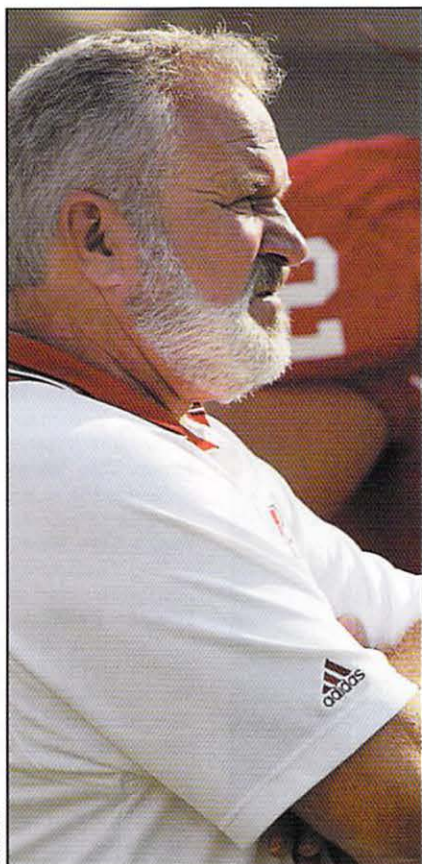
A coach must encourage development while at the same time convince players that his decisions are based on substantial reasons, that personal feelings don't enter into the equation.

"I think the biggest part of coaching is to have young people understand their roles," said Tenopir. "Obviously, we can't have but five starting (interior) linemen."

"You're always going to have those that think they should be there."

Team success depends on a coach's getting non-starters to accept their roles.

That's "probably a little easier for



Milt Tenopir says the biggest part of coaching is to have young people understand their roles.

an offensive lineman because if you can't whip the best guy we've got on defense, you're probably not ready to play," Tenopir said. "I think kids accept that."

"But there's more to it. You can be a physically dominant football player, but you can also be a not-very-sharp football player, too. So all of those things you weigh into it."

An offensive lineman is expected to do the right things in the right way. If his technique is poor, if he's not stepping properly, he's not going to be successful. And he won't be playing.

Tenopir and Dan Young do the bulk of their evaluation of linemen in the spring and in two-a-day practices. Starting positions are determined during that time. Once "you emerge as the starting guy, the best guy at your spot, you're going to keep that spot unless you lay an egg," said Tenopir.

Nebraska's starting offensive interior was the same through the first eight games, with the only exception being sophomore Nick Povendo's replacing redshirted freshman Richie Incognito during the first half of the Iowa State game because Incognito had been suspended.

Otherwise, the starting interior has been the same: Incognito and Dan Vili Waldrop at the tackles, Mike Erickson and Wes Cody at the guards and John Garrison at center. In addition, Povendo and Junior Tagoa'i have emerged as the swing players at tackle and guard, respectively.

That isn't to say those in back-up roles can't move up.

"You're going to have a kid come in and maybe play a little better than you and if that's a consistent pattern, we have to make changes," Tenopir said. "But I don't ever want players, once they've earned a spot at No. 1, to play out of fear of losing that spot."

"If you do that, you're going to have kids that are worried about making mistakes. There are going to be mistakes made. It's how fast you make those in this game."

The coaches demand full effort on every down, no hesitation.

"I've tried to instill that in kids," said Tenopir. "I've talked to my top guys before every first ballgame and told them why they're there, what it means to be a starter at Nebraska in the offensive line."

"I want them to take pride in that fact and know that they're there because they worked the hardest and absorbed things the best. I think that builds rapport."

In a best-case scenario, he and Young would be able to rotate players at every position.

"You'd like to have interchangeable kids, but that doesn't happen," he said. "You're always going to have your five best and two or three others that are close. You'd like to be able to play 10 or 15 kinds without having a dropoff. But that doesn't exist at any level."

Regardless of where they are on the depth chart, however, he will defend them against critics. ■

OFF LINE

With the NCAA's 85-scholarship limit, there's considerably less margin for error, or injury, than there once was. Consider Nebraska's depth in the offensive line.

The Cornhuskers are without four offensive linemen from the 1999 recruiting class, including two because of injuries: Tim Green and Chris Loos. In addition, Toniou Fonoti left early for the National Football League, and Jon Dawson left the team, following off-the-field problems.

Green, Loos and Dawson would have been juniors this season.

Green and Loos could return in the spring.

But offensive line coach Milt Tenopir hasn't spent any time wondering what the line could have looked like. "If you're going to say, 'What if?' as a coach, you shouldn't be in the business," he told the Lincoln Journal Star recently. "You have to leave that kind of thinking to the press."

WE'RE IN THE BAND

Cornhuskers Brett Lindstrom and Joe Chrisman are members of the rock band Golliday — which was named after their teammate Aaron Golliday, a senior tight end.

The five-member band began performing last semester, with Lindstrom as the lead singer and Chrisman playing guitar. The band has another guitar player, a bass player and a drummer.

Chrisman told the Lincoln Journal Star that the band has "kind of a grunge-rock sound."

COMING ON STRONG

Freshman split end Ross Pilkington continues to impress the coaches.

"He has really stepped up," said Coach Frank Solich. "He's a guy that when the ball's in the air, you know he's going to catch the ball. He's got excellent hands, and he runs excellent patterns."

"He's got the size and the strength to be an excellent blocker in our running game. He's putting all that together and turning out to be an excellent receiver."



Ross Pilkington

HEISMAN COMPANY

Oklahoma State's Tatum Bell rushed for 182 yards against the Cornhusker Blackshirts. His total ranks sixth all-time against Nebraska. The list of the top 10 individual rushing totals against Nebraska includes six Heisman Trophy winners, Billy Sims (1978), Billy Vessels (1952), Barry Sanders (1988), Steve Owens (1969), Howard Cassidy (1955) and Rashaan Salaam (1994).

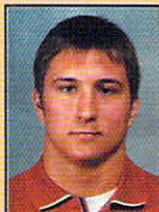
1. Billy Sims, Oklahoma 247 (1979)
2. Curt Warner, Penn State 238 (1981)
3. Billy Vessels, Oklahoma 205 (1950)
4. Chris Brown, Colorado 198 (2001)
5. Barry Sanders, Okla. St. 189 (1988)
6. Tatum Bell, Oklahoma St. 182 (2002)
7. James Wilder, Missouri 181 (1978)
8. Steve Owens, Oklahoma 172 (1968)
9. Howard Cassidy, Ohio St. 170 (1955)
10. Rashaan Salaam, Colo. 165 (1993)

QUICK HITS

What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?

BRAIN TRUST

The Nebraska football team has struggled at times on the field this season but not in the classroom. Sophomore middle linebacker Chad Sievers, who carries a 4.0 grade-point average in business administration, is among 14 Cornhuskers nominated for Academic All-America honors.



Chad Sievers

The nomination was senior rush end Chris Kelsay's third. Kelsay, a co-captain, has a 3.529 GPA in finance. He was an Academic All-District VII honoree last season.

Junior fullback Judd Davies also was an All-District VII selection a year ago and is among the 14 nominees. He carries a 3.896 cumulative GPA in communication studies.

The others: Philip Bland (3.248, general studies), Chad Buller (3.355, business administration), Troy Hassebroek (3.21, middle grades education), Trevor Johnson (3.40, business administration), David Kolowski (3.323, social sciences), Phil Peetz (3.931, criminal justice), Pat Ricketts (3.405, business administration), Kyle Ringenberg (3.778, exercise science), Barrett Ruud (3.321, management), Mike Stuntz (3.795, general studies) and Aaron Terpening (3.22, architectural studies).

DUKES' CONTRIBUTION

Freshman quarterback Curt Dukes contributed to Nebraska's 24-13 victory against Missouri without taking a snap. During practice leading up to the game, Dukes "impersonated" the Tigers' freshman quarterback sensation on the scout team. And he was a good fit for the role.

He "has good movement," Coach Frank Solich the week of the game. "Certainly, Brad has more true speed than what Curt has, but Curt has an excellent combination of things. He's a very poised quarterback. He throws the ball well. He runs the ball well and will do that against our No. 1 defense."

"You won't get the actual picture of Brad Smith operating their offense, but it's as good as we can do, and Curt's doing a good job at it." Nebraska limited Smith to 157 total yards.

He went into the game among the nation's total offense leaders, averaging 332 yards.

BEST IT'S BEEN

New Coach Mike Anderson's first class of baseball recruits was ranked 23rd in the nation by Collegiate Baseball. That's Nebraska's highest-ever ranking.

The Cornhuskers were among only four Big 12 teams in the rankings. The others were national champion Texas (sixth), Baylor (13th) and Oklahoma State (22nd).

Nebraska's 2002 class includes nine high school and six junior college players. Four of the high school players were first-team all-state selections: infielder Alex Gordon from Lincoln, Neb.; pitchers Rob Morrissey and Zach Kroenke from Omaha; and pitcher Tim Schoeninger from Denver.

Morrissey and Schoeninger are right-handers. Kroenke is a left-hander.

Gordon was Nebraska's Gatorade "Player of the Year" in 2001 and 2002.

Four of the junior college players have been selected in the major league free agent draft: right-handed pitcher Quinton Robertson, right-handed pitcher John Brownell, outfielder Brandon Fusilier and infielder Joe Gullion. The 6-foot-5, 220-pound Robertson was a junior college All-American.



Mike Anderson



Shane Komine

KOMINE UPDATE

Former Cornhusker All-American Shane Komine spent his first season in professional baseball with the Oakland A's team in Visalia, Calif. Pitching as a reliever, Komine posted a 1-3 record with a 5.96 earned-run average. He struck out 22 and walked 20 in 25 2/3 innings.

He is playing in the Arizona Instructional League this fall.

The A's are bringing him along slowly, Komine told the Lincoln Journal Star.

"They didn't want to burn me out, so I got in a few innings, rested up and now I'm as healthy as I've ever been," he told the newspaper. He was hampered by injuries while at Nebraska. ■

A Rare Honor

True freshman cornerback Washington 'surprised and happy' to get a Blackshirt



Mike BABCOCK

FABIAN WASHINGTON seemed tired at the beginning of practice on the Tuesday before the Oklahoma State game, "really tired, noticeably tired," secondary coach George Darlington said.

However, midway through the practice, during a natural break before changing stations, Washington received a black jersey. And after that, "he was still tired, but he pepped up," said Darlington.

Even though Washington had only been on campus since the summer, he was familiar enough with the significance of being a Blackshirt to be excited on the day he became one.

"I was surprised and happy at the same time," he said following the practice.

He didn't know much about the Blackshirt tradition when he arrived from Bradenton, Fla. But every defensive player learns quickly. "Once I got here, I knew about it," he said.

Washington is among those in whom Nebraska's future has been invested, a true freshman who has played well enough to earn a starting position — and a black practice jersey to go with it.

The last true freshman Blackshirt also was a cornerback. Keyuo Craver earned one near the end of the 1998 season, following Erwin Swiney in 1997 and Ralph Brown in 1996.

It's a rare honor, but one Washington earned. "He's doing a good job and showing skills," Darlington said. "We just expect him to improve by leaps and bounds as the season goes along."

Washington wasted little time in making his mark, intercepting a pass and returning it 29 yards for a touchdown with less than two minutes remaining in the opener against Arizona State. In the next seven games, he intercepted two more passes as well as causing a fumble and recovering one.

His first start came against McNeese State, but he had to wait for the Blackshirt.

"He's fairly consistent, but still doesn't understand, like most freshmen, how we want you to play every down like it's a game," said Darlington. "Sometimes in high school, you can kind of take things off. But we want to see it every play. He needs to understand that every play is important."

Players are expected to do things instinctively, to the point that "if you're knocked unconscious, where you still can function physically but you aren't with it, you'll still play your technique right and hard," Darlington said. "It's

habitual. You want to have your practice habits that way."

Washington came to Nebraska with impressive credentials. He was a SuperPrep All-American, considered by many as the top prep defensive back out of Florida, playing at Bradenton's Bayshore High. He also returned kicks and was No. 13 on the Rivals.com list of all-around athletes.

His position coach at Bayshore High was former Cornhusker defensive back Leslie Dennis (1994-96), a graduate of Southeast High in Bradenton. That increased his chances of playing immediately.

"You knew what was being imparted to him in high school had its roots here," said Darlington. "Of course, he had athletic ability. We watched him on film, and he did some good things."

"So we expected him to come in and contribute (right away)."

Dennis, who started at cornerback in the 1994 Kickoff Classic against West Virginia, "was telling me, 'You can come in and play early,'" Washington said. "He said you've just got to put in hard work."

Dennis also told him, "it's going to be tough sometimes, but just stick it out."

It has been difficult at times. But Washington hasn't hesitated to ask older teammates in the secondary for help when he has needed it. "I feel confident asking them," he said.

"I don't always have to go to the coach. I ask other players."

The addition of Washington and sophomore Lannie Hopkins, who also received a black practice jersey on the Tuesday before the Oklahoma State game, brought the total Blackshirts to 17. Only five of them are seniors, which is reason for optimism about the future of the defense.

Plus, 15 of the 36 players on the defensive depth chart are either freshmen or sophomores.

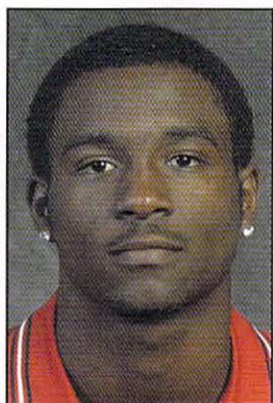
Washington has always been confident, but success has come more quickly than he expected.

The veterans have accepted him. "Everybody's cool with me," he said.

And the understandable homesickness he felt when he first arrived has begun to dissipate with the realization that "football is football," he said. "It's working out good."

He wasn't expecting to be able to trade his yellow practice jersey for a Blackshirt so quickly. But "I'm happy," Washington said. "Now I just have to do what a Blackshirt does, play hard."

Darlington could see a change during the second half of his first practice as a Blackshirt. ■



Fabian Washington
scored a touchdown in
his first game at NU.



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More 'Man'

Transition back to mostly man-to-man defense comes after working to implement more zone



Terry DOUGLASS

AS NEBRASKA defensive coordinator Craig Bohl continues looking for answers and the right combinations, it now appears that his search has come full circle. After living on a heavy diet of man-to-man pass coverage for several years, the Cornhuskers have rediscovered their roots.

"We're a man-based team," said Nebraska senior right cornerback DeJuan Groce, who led the squad with four interceptions and had three pass breakups through the first eight games. "That's what I came here for is to play man."

The transition back to mostly man-to-man coverage comes after the defensive coaching staff spent a good share of spring practice and preseason fall camp working to implement more zone. The Huskers were sold on the switch initially, citing the ball-hawking zone pass coverage used by such elite defenses as Miami and Oklahoma. Even Groce spoke of zone coverage giving the Blackshirts more opportunities to go after the football and make big plays.

However, a 40-7 loss at Penn State apparently changed some of that. Nittany Lion quarterback Zack Mills picked Nebraska apart, completing 19-of-31 pass attempts for 259 yards. He passed for 157 yards in the first half to open up the running game, and PSU finished with 476 yards of total offense.

Though there appeared to be some wide open holes in the Nebraska zone, strongside linebacker Scott Shanle said it wasn't that the team was having trouble learning to play zone defense. It was more that it just didn't seem to be a scheme befitting of the Blackshirts' style, he said.

"For five years, all I've ran was man-to-man defense," Shanle said. "For guys like DeJuan and myself, it just didn't feel like we were as aggressive as we used to be. We saw after a couple of games following the Penn State game that playing man-to-man defense is what we do well."

"Some of those things that we were doing wrong came when we weren't even giving ourselves a chance to make plays."

In retrospect, it wasn't as if pass coverage had been a glaring weakness for the Huskers. Nebraska was No. 1 in the Big 12 Conference and second in the country last season in pass efficiency defense, allowing opponents to complete just 43.3 percent of their pass attempts.

Free safety Philip Bland said the attempt to transition into more of a zone coverage team was difficult for nearly everyone.

"We were about 85 percent a man team last year," Bland said. "Any time you try to mix in zone to where you're running it 40-50 percent of the time, it's going to be tough, just because we haven't been doing it."

"I think any time we can run man effectively, we're going to be doing a lot of that."

Since the Penn State loss, several Husker players said the amount of man-to-man coverage they play has increased. Despite the 36-14 loss at Iowa State, Nebraska limited Heisman Trophy candidate Seneca Wallace to 220 passing yards and intercepted him twice.

Now, it appears the Blackshirts are at least showing signs of getting back on track with decent performances in wins over McNeese State and Missouri. Nebraska's defense was especially impressive in the second half against the Tigers, holding the Brad Smith-led offense to just 28 second-half yards.

Coming off a huge game against Oklahoma's vaunted defense that earned him national player of the week honors, Smith completed 14-of-29 pass attempts for 123 yards and no touchdowns against Nebraska. The Tigers were limited to 220 total yards — less than half their average. Although Rashaun

Woods' 11-reception day for Oklahoma State in its win over the Huskers would have to be termed a setback, Groce said he's still seeing improvement.

"Everybody is holding up pretty good," Groce said. "We've got good players, and they've been taking the task of going up against the top receivers. We're not worried about it. We can man up against anybody as far as I can see."

While there has been plenty of talk about returning to more man coverage, Bohl said some of it has to do with the opponents Nebraska has faced. Of course, you also have to keep in mind that Bohl would like opponents to have to prepare for all types of coverages when they face the Huskers.

"A lot of that has been tailor-made to the type of opponents that we're playing against," Bohl said. "We're not abandoning zone defense. There's

still a place for it, but because of the nature of the game and how our matchups are, and what teams are doing offensively, we've just been playing a lot more man-to-man defense."

Bohl said that even when the Huskers do use zone coverage, the schemes remain aggressive in nature.

"To say that you will see a bend-but-not-break defense out of us is not accurate," Bohl said. "We will still challenge and will still play hard."

Of course, Bohl wouldn't divulge what percentage mix of man and zone coverage the Huskers are using for each game but said he still wants to use enough zone to keep teams guessing.

"An opponent can't come out and say that every time, Nebraska is going to be in man to man," Bohl said. "I think we're throwing enough of a curveball that people are somewhat confused, but you'd better know who you are."

"You'd better stick to your knittin' and we knew that we were a man team. We knew that we are going to be challenged, but we wanted to emphasize what we do well." ■



Craig Bohl says NU's coverage is tailored to the opponent.

Terry Douglass is the sports editor of the Grand Independent. He can be reached at tddouglass@netzer.com

Rocky Road

Big 12 coaches say focus, preparation, maturity among the keys to playing well away from home



Curt McKEEVER

AS THE SECOND HALF of the season began, five Big 12 Conference teams — Baylor, Missouri, Oklahoma State, Nebraska and Kansas State — were still shopping for their first road wins.

What? Did the league start requiring its football teams to play football games in basketball arenas?

"I don't know if it should be (tougher to win on the road). The reality is that it is — in the major conferences," said Texas Tech Coach Mike Leach.

"Playing at home is a huge advantage. Certainly, a big part of it's the crowd. The other part is kind of hard to gauge. I suspect it's just the intangibles of disrupting your schedule and just being in a different environment."

Leach's club won three of its first five games away from Lubbock. The Red Raiders lost at unbeaten Ohio State and to nationally ranked Iowa State, but they also had a tough enough mentality and focus to hand Texas A&M a rare home defeat.

"You can hand signal and do all kinds of things, but when it's just this loud roar, any time you have the ball you're going to lose something in communication on the road," Leach said. "I think the mindset's part of it, and one thing that's really important is to try and duplicate the pregame schedule (from home to road) as much as possible — the same routine at the hotel and things of that nature."

Iowa State Coach Dan McCarney said that is easier said than done, "because you know on game day it's going to be completely different."

The Cyclones rid themselves of some anxieties by winning at Iowa in their first true road game this season. That left them 8-3 in their last 11 such contests.

"If you've got a good football team, you enjoy going on the road in those atmospheres, when it's you against the world," said McCarney, after pointing out his club failed to live up to that example during its 49-3 loss at Oklahoma. "God bless it, it was really ugly (there), and that's due to the great job that Oklahoma did with their players, and the fans and atmosphere."

"That's about as loud a stadium as I've been in. Your focus has to be tremendous when you go into an environment like that."

Texas A&M Coach R.C. Slocum, though, knows crowd noise isn't always the biggest obstacle teams have to overcome on the road.

The Aggies won their first three road games this year, and faced little animosity while playing at Kansas on Oct. 19 in a stadium that was barely half full.

"We knew there wouldn't be a huge crowd, and it's hard," Slocum said of trying to motivate his team. "We play at home in front of 80,000, and it's a charged atmosphere. It's different when you go on the road to some places. In those places, I

think you have to prep your team that it's going to be a little different, but the game counts just as much.

"If you're going on the road in one of those big-time atmospheres, that usually takes care of itself."

Like A&M, Colorado has had success quieting its opponent's home crowd. The Buffaloes have won at UCLA and Kansas.

"Usually, maturity of the team (matters most)," said CU Coach Gary Barnett. "I don't think it's a program that plays, one year after the other, well on the road. I think it's a combination of talent and maturity, as much as anything."

"Sometimes, we find ourselves more focused on the road than when we're at home. We don't have tickets to take care of, family staying at apartments. When we go on the road, we're totally thinking about football. I think lots of times it's good to get away."

Oklahoma Coach Bob Stoops points out to his team that the field is 100 yards long no matter where the Sooners are playing and that the difference between wearing a home or road uniform should matter little when it comes to level of play.

"We try and talk about having a little extra attitude and toughness on the road to make sure we can handle some of those things," Stoops said.

Even so, the Sooners had to survive a major scare at Missouri to remain a top contender for the BCS national championship game.

"The bottom line is you have to be tough enough to deal with it and still be prepared, concentrate and play," Stoops said.

Nobody in the Big 12 has been able to match Texas' recent road success.

After outlasting Kansas State on Oct. 19, the Longhorns were 3-0 this season and had won their last 11 true road games. That's the longest streak at Texas since it won 13 games in a row from 1981-84.

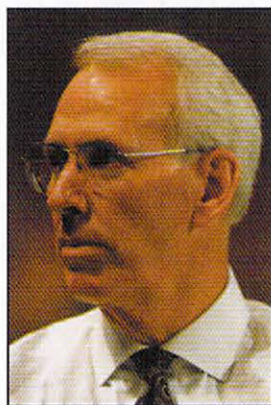
Texas' next trip was to Nebraska, owner of the nation's longest home winning streak. But the last time the Longhorns went to Lincoln, they ended the Huskers' 47-game winning streak in Memorial Stadium.

"I don't know if anyone has an answer to (how to get teams to play as well on the road as they do at home)," Slocum said. "Every team that I know has a better home record than they do a road record, so there's some disadvantage to going on the road."

"We just try and talk about the realities, that if you're going to be good or have a good season you have to go play games on the road and you have to play well in those games."

Even then, that doesn't guarantee any team of a happy flight back home.

"It's always fun to go on the road and win," Slocum said. ■



R.C. Slocum's Texas A&M team won its first three road games this year.

Curt McKeever is a sportswriter, covering the University of Nebraska for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football he is the primary beat writer for the men's basketball and baseball teams.

Second Chance

Experience in oil fields convinced Williams to give school another try

Demorrio Williams matured quickly after graduating high school. Working in the oil fields of east Texas, even for only a few months, can have that effect.

"You have to grow up a lot faster," said Williams. "You're around older people, and they're not on a lot of horseplay. They're pretty serious minded about the situation."

The situation in which he found himself involved 10-hour workdays and sometimes seven-day workweeks as a welder's assistant. Though the winter weather in east Texas doesn't match Nebraska's, it's more than a little unpleasant, according to Williams. "It was real cold, but you've got to get the job done," he said. "You're getting up early in the morning, working in the rain."

"You're freezing, and you don't want to be out there."

Simply put, "it wasn't no fun," he said.

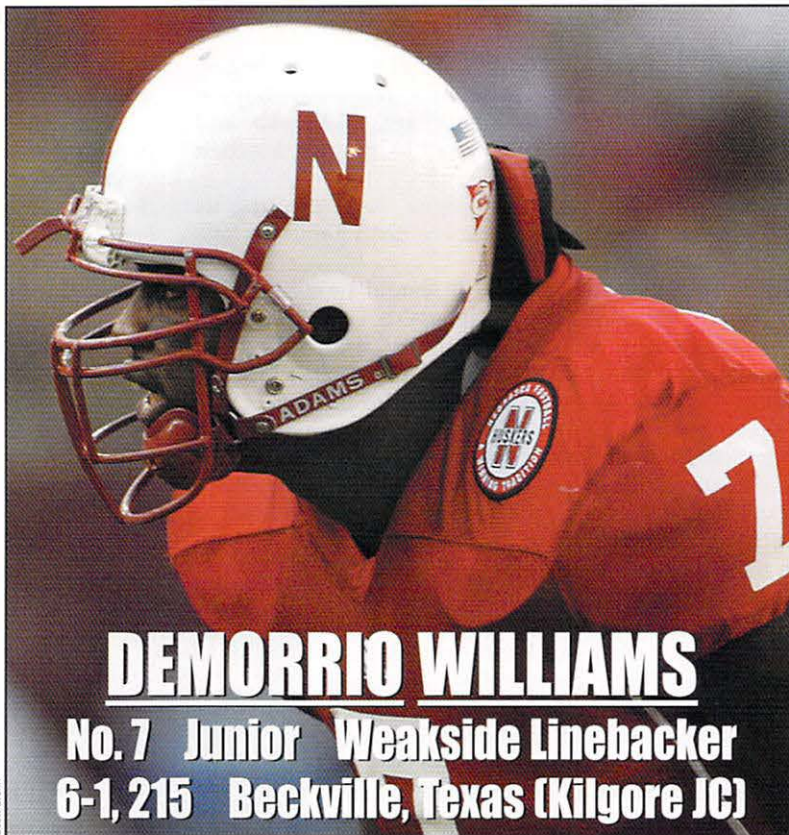
The job was never fun, but until the weather turned, he could tolerate it. "I was making some money, not paying bills, buying whatever, looking nice every day. So I couldn't complain."

Continuing his education and playing football didn't seem all that important for a while. "You don't think about stuff like that when you've got a pocketful of money," he said.

When the cold came, however, pocket money or not, life in the oil fields was exposed for what it is. "I experienced a hard life," Williams said. "And I didn't want to experience it no more."

The experience was sufficient to convince him to give junior college a second chance.

Williams had gone to Cisco, Texas,



DEMORRIO WILLIAMS

**No. 7 Junior Weakside Linebacker
6-1, 215 Beckville, Texas (Kilgore JC)**

Junior College, hoping to play football as a defensive back. But Cisco is a long way from Beckville, and he lasted barely a week before returning home.

A cousin persuaded him to try Kilgore Junior College, which was only about 30 miles from Beckville, after the stint in the oil fields. Williams talked to the football coaches there, and they encouraged him to walk on. "They told me to come out and they'd go from there," he said.

That was enough for him. All he wanted was a chance.

"I always had a love for football," said Williams. "I was just doubted so much coming up. People looked at me and said I was a small guy. I was real small. It wasn't a question of whether I wanted to play or not. It was a question of who would let me play for them, who would give me a chance."

"People didn't want to gamble on that (his size), I guess."

If his size was a factor, so was the fact that Beckville High was more successful in basketball than football. Williams played basketball, too. He was "just like I am now, a hustler. I played strictly defense. I'd be on the best player they had. I really wasn't a big shooter," he said.

Basketball was all right. "If I would have put my mind to it, I think I could have played (in college). But I'm a physical type person, and basketball just wasn't physical enough."

The football team's lack of success, and the school's size — Beckville competes one classification up from the smallest — kept him from attracting recruiting attention from major colleges.

Beckville is located between Carthage and Tatum, communities with solid football traditions in large

classifications, Williams said. Beckville High hadn't reached the state football playoffs since 1989. So recruiters rarely came calling. Stephen F. Austin College recruited a teammate. But that was it.

Williams emerged at Kilgore, after moving from the secondary to outside linebacker, where he made 257 tackles during his two seasons. Kilgore was 12-0 his sophomore season.

The much more mature Williams was recruited by Colorado and Florida as well as Texas and Texas A&M. But Nebraska was the first to make contact, and that was a deciding factor.

"I'm going to stick with the team that was behind me from the start," Williams said.

Cornhusker assistant Turner Gill "showed me a lot of interest, kept me on top of everything, what my role was going to be," said Williams. "He let me know they really wanted me here."

His route to Nebraska has been circuitous, from Beckville to Cisco through the oil fields and then on to Kilgore. But it hasn't necessarily been random.

"You've just got to pray about this stuff and keep praying about it; something is going to happen," he said. "God is going to put you somewhere that you need to be."

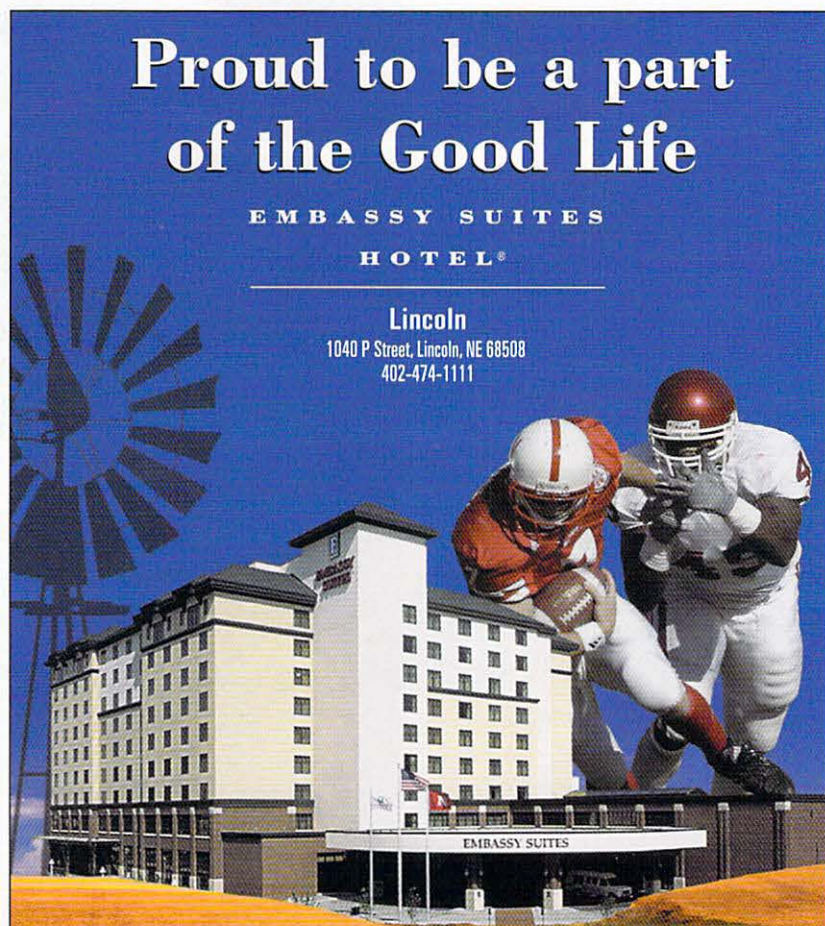
Whatever the reason, Williams knew he didn't need to be in the oil fields.

He worked "until it was spring and time to play ball," he said. ■

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Home Sw

NU's 26-game home winning streak started after loss to Texas in 1998

By Mike Babcock

Chris Kelsay sat with Nebraska's other freshman redshirts at Memorial Stadium on his 19th birthday, watching his brother Chad, a senior rush end. It was Halloween of 1998.

The image is vivid. "I was kind of in awe," Chris Kelsay said. "I couldn't believe it."

Josh Brown also was among the freshmen redshirts sitting in the southeast corner of the stadium. Afterward, "I think half our class was in tears because we lost," he said.

He was exaggerating the part about the tears, but only slightly.

John Garrison was at Memorial Stadium that day, too. The game was the first he ever attended there. He was a high school senior from Blue Springs, Mo., on a recruiting trip.

Afterward, "it was like leaving a funeral," he said.

The Cornhuskers, ranked No. 7 by the Associated Press, lost to Texas that day. Nebraska hadn't lost to an unranked opponent at home since 1978 — 35-31 against Missouri.

Mike Brown made 19 tackles, and the Blackshirts "limited" Ricky Williams to 150 yards rushing, 60 below his season's average. But that wasn't enough. The Longhorns won 20-16.

Ricky Williams rushed for 150 yards in Texas' 20-16 victory that ended Nebraska's 47-game home winning streak Oct. 31, 1998. In this Huskers Illustrated cover photo, linebacker Brian Shaw (46) and a teammate slow down Williams (34), who carried 37 times but did not score a touchdown.

Troy Hassebrook, another of the redshirts, remembers "walking out and every Texas fan I saw, it was just something that I despised, the cockiness, 'We won. Your team lost,'" he said.

The Longhorns celebrated with their fans in the stadium's southwest corner, making the Hook 'em Horns sign. "That just lights a fire under you, that 'I'm never going to lose to Texas again,'" said Hassebrook. "You don't want to lose to Texas. Hopefully, that won't happen again."

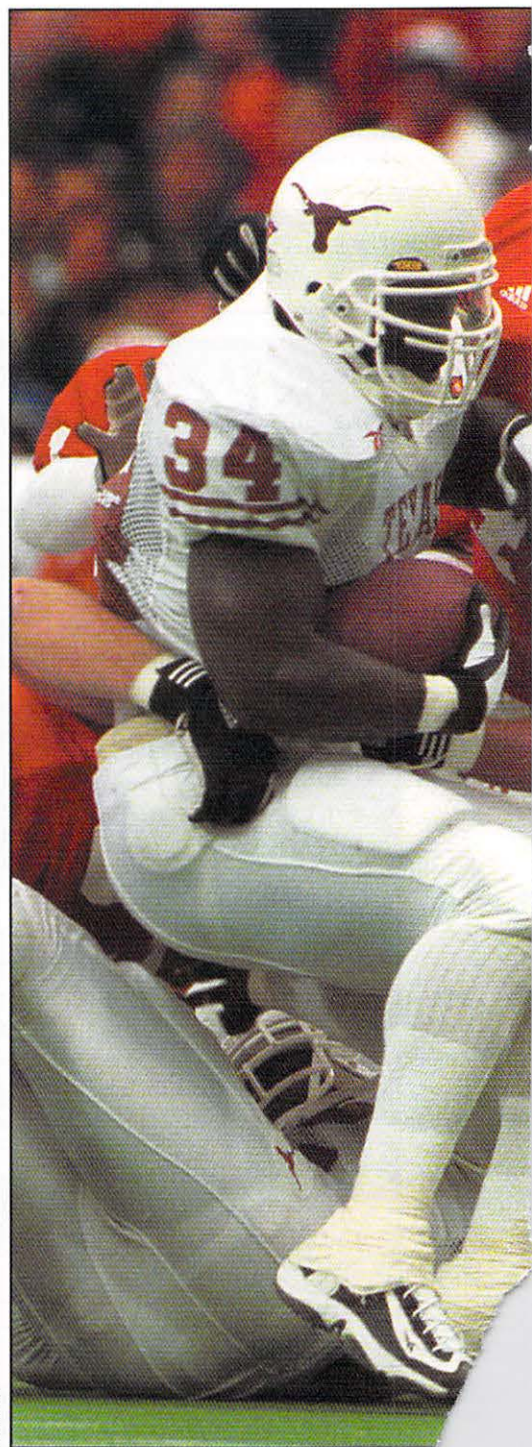
That was the Longhorns' last visit to Lincoln, and, more significantly, Nebraska's last loss at home. The Cornhuskers have won 26 in a row at Memorial Stadium — and 73 of the last 74. The Texas game in 1998 ended a 47-game home winning streak, the fifth longest in NCAA history.

Nebraska hadn't lost at home since Sept. 21, 1991, 36-21 against Washington.

Such streaks are "important around here," Brown said. "You lose one, you start another. We're going to do our very best to keep that one alive, especially with Texas coming in."

Several streaks have ended this season, and others are in jeopardy. But Nebraska will try to preserve the NCAA's longest current home-winning streak when the Longhorns come to town.

The situations are reversed from 1998. The Cornhuskers are unranked, and have been since their 36-14 loss at Iowa State, while Texas has been in the Top 10, and as high as No. 2.



Even so, Nebraska has played well at home, going back about as long as anyone can remember. T

eet Home



At Memorial Stadium

- ✓ Nebraska has won 26 straight games since a 20-16 loss to Texas Oct. 31, 1998.
- ✓ Nebraska has won 73 of 74 games since a 36-21 loss to Washington Sept. 21, 1991.
- ✓ Nebraska has a 94-3 record in the last 14 seasons.
- ✓ Nebraska has not lost more than one game in a season since 1980, when it finished 5-2 at home.
- ✓ Nebraska has a 31-1 record under Frank Solich.

Solich at home. And they haven't lost more than one home game since 1980, when they were 5-2. In addition to the 47- and current 26-game home winning streaks during that time, they have had winning streaks of 21 (1981-84) and 19 (1988-90).

They have won over three-fourths of their games at Memorial Stadium (336-99-13) since it was built in 1923.

Opponents "know they're playing a lot of history and heart," said Brown.

"There's something when you come in here, just the sense that you get, knowing that you're playing here in Memorial Stadium, a stadium that's been sitting here since the early 1900s.

"So there's a lot of history and a lot of power that comes with that history."

An NCAA-record 252 consecutive sellouts have contributed to Nebraska's home-field advantage. The fans "are obviously our 12th man," Brown said. "I think teams sense that. They're forewarned before they come in here that it's going to be rowdy and wild. We take a lot of pride in that.

"It's all part of the Nebraska mystique."

The Cornhuskers and their fans

have a unique relationship, according to Hassebrook. "It's kind of a family relationship," he said. "We support one another through thick and thin.

"Everybody is connected. Everybody feeds off one another. It's something you love. Especially in big games, the crowd really gets into it when the players show a little emotion."

Hassebrook, who grew up in Lincoln, went to his first game at Memorial Stadium by selling candy to raise money for the Midget Football program in which he participated.

He wouldn't have been enthusiastic about selling the candy door-to-door had it not been for the reward. He had never been to a Nebraska football game, even though he lived not far from the stadium and could see the red balloons released after the Cornhuskers scored for the first time.

"So that was something I wanted to do," he said. "It was phenomenal."

He was impressed with the players, how "humongous they were. You see them on TV. You hear (games) on the radio, but just to get a chance to experience the atmos-

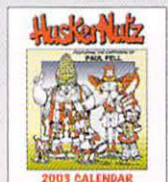
Cornhuskers are 94-3 at Memorial Stadium in the last 14 seasons.

They are 31-1 under Coach Frank

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where," he said.

The only better way to experience the atmosphere is to be a player.

"Walking out of the tunnel multiplies it by 10," Hassebrook said. "The fans are really cheering for you, rather than just cheering for the players that you've seen on television."

DeJuan Groce suited up for the first game he ever saw at Memorial Stadium, against Louisiana Tech in 1998. He was a freshman, and the decision had not yet been made to redshirt him.

"I didn't know what the heck I was getting into," said Groce. "I had heard about it, but I had never really experienced it. I couldn't believe all

the people were out here like that.

"Before the game, everybody was downtown, walking around. It gave you a sense of pride just being on the team. Everybody was coming out to see you play. It was wild."

The players on this year's team have never lost at Memorial Stadium. Groce and the other seniors have been involved in 25 of the 26 victories since the Texas loss in 1998.

Groce was sitting with the red-shirts on that Halloween. And like everyone else, "I was pretty upset" afterward, he said. "I remember how down everybody was."

"I don't want that feeling to happen again." ■

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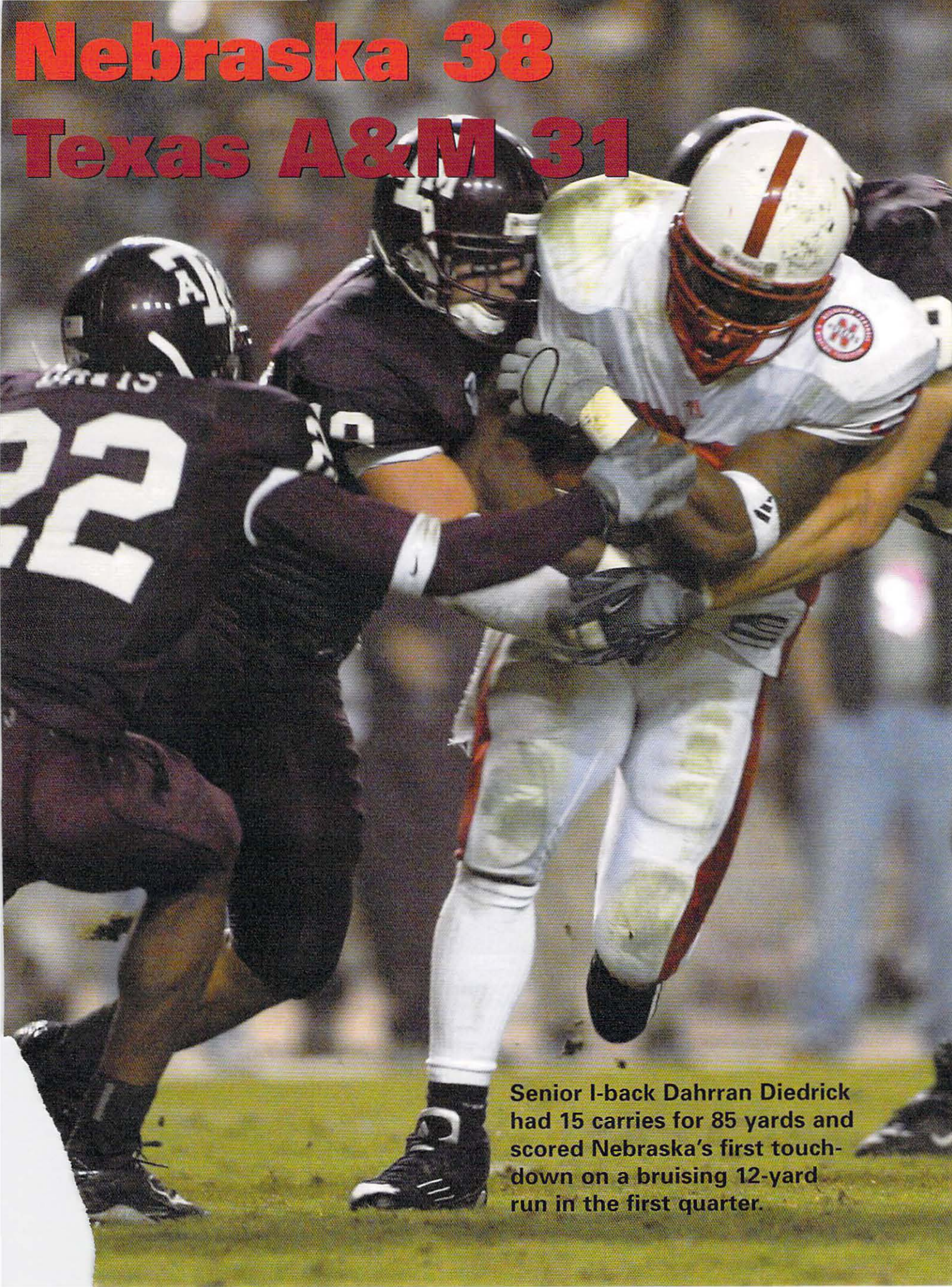


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Nebraska 38

Texas A&M 31

Senior I-back Dahrran Diedrick had 15 carries for 85 yards and scored Nebraska's first touchdown on a bruising 12-yard run in the first quarter.

Out of t

Weather adds dream quality to dramatic comeback

By Mike Babcock

The fog that began rolling into Kyle Field during the third quarter lent an element of the surreal to Nebraska's dramatic, 38-31 comeback victory against Texas A&M.

There was a dream quality to the game, as if a Cornhusker team that had been missing and feared lost had returned, emerging from the east Texas mist, not like a specter but real after all.

The team battled back from a 17-point deficit midway through the third quarter and ran around and through the best rushing defense in the Big 12, and fifth best in the nation, gaining 381 yards.

It featured a freshman I-back, who gained 128 yards and scored four touchdowns, and was led by a junior quarterback, who finally broke a public silence that began soon after the Iowa State game.

Running, "that's our strength," Jammal Lord said, pointing out an obvious fact about Nebraska football. "When you run for that many yards, you're going to win."

And when Nebraska runs for that many yards, its offensive line is getting the job done in a big way, something that hasn't always been the case this season — putting a smile on the face of offensive line coach Milt Tenopir. "We had a bunch of kids that buckled down and got after it," he said.



Quarterback Jammal Lord celebrates (above) after Nebraska's come-from-behind victory. Lord, who led the Huskers with 159 yards rushing, shows his power by running over Texas A&M cornerback Byron Jones (right) on a fourth-quarter carry.

PHOTOS BY DEREK LIPPINCOTT

"Our kids played with great heart."

They had to. A&M's "Wrecking Crew" defense was allowing an average of only 76.9 yards per game on the ground and hadn't given up as many as 381 rushing yards to an opponent since 1970.

It had never allowed one player to rush for four touchdowns. But David Horne did it, on plays of 2, 21, 11 and 6 yards. "I take it on myself to make big plays," said Horne. "I'm a big play guy."

Like everyone else, however, credited his opportunities to

the Fog



offensive line.

It "had a big game for us," he said. Dahrran Diedrick, who rushed for 78 yards in the second half and finished with 85, was effusive in his praise of the line. "There were creases—not just gaps, big creases," he

What the line did wasn't "fancy," Tenopir said. "They fought their butts off."

Everyone on both sides of the ball did, showing a spunk that seemed to have been missing at times this season. The Cornhuskers played with "tremendous character, with tremen-

dous heart," said Coach Frank Solich. "What a great job they did, staying with it, believing in themselves."

"The kids hung in there. I thought it was a great effort."

Nebraska wasted no time establishing its intentions, driving to a



The Nebraska defense was able to put pressure on Texas A&M quarterback Dustin Long, who had passed for 399 yards the previous game. Weakside linebacker Demorrio Williams (7) gets ready to sack Long (above) for a 15-yard loss in the fourth quarter. Rush end Justin Smith (92) tries to knock down a pass (right) in the first quarter.



touchdown, 80 yards on eight plays, on the game's first series. Lord carried on five of the plays, for 61 yards.

And Diedrick finished it off with a 12-yard run on which he broke through three would-be tacklers, driving the third, 6-foot-3, 255-pound linebacker Jesse Hunnicutt, into the end zone.

By the end of the first quarter, however, the Aggies had taken the lead on touchdowns set up by the kind of miscues that had plagued Nebraska in three road losses.

The first came on a blocked Kyle Larson punt that was scooped up and returned and the second followed a fumbled pitch by Diedrick that gave A&M the ball at the Nebraska 6-yard line.

In a two-minute-five-second span, the Cornhuskers found themselves behind 14-7.

They would come back to tie the score at 14 midway through the second quarter only to see A&M mount a 12-play, 67-yard touchdown drive that ended with 16 seconds remaining.

The Aggies increased the lead to 17 in the third quarter with a field goal and the help of another Nebraska mistake, a Lord fumble that Byron Jones returned 66 yards for a touchdown.

But instead of folding, the Cornhuskers rallied, on the ground. They went 68 yards on three plays, Diedrick carries for gains of 18 and 29 yards and Horne's second touchdown.

Then they drove 81 yards on 13 plays, beginning in the third quarter and culminating in the fourth, for the Horne touchdown that cut the deficit to three, at 31-28.

Twice during the drive Solich elected to go on a fourth down, the first time needing only inches but at his own 28-yard line. "I wouldn't classify it as desperation," Solich said of the decision.

"It was such a short distance to go and the odds were in our favor."

Fullback Judd Davies picked up the inches, barely.

Down the stretch, it appeared the A&M defense was helpless to stop

Nebraska from running. The Cornhuskers took the lead after a shanked punt gave them possession at the Aggie 35.

Six plays later, Horne scored again. Josh Brown finished off the scoring with a 42-yard field goal on Nebraska's next possession. But the drama wasn't over.

With 5:59 remaining, A&M began a series that carried from its 32-yard line to the Nebraska 9, where the Aggies had first-and-goal with just over 2 minutes on the clock.

Quarterback Dustin Long, under heavy pressure, threw the ball into the end zone, and into the hands of Cornhusker free safety Philip Bland. The interception, Long's second, ended Aggie hopes.

Nebraska's defense, like the offense, played with "tremendous resolve," said defensive coordinator Craig Bohl. "Our players never lacked confidence going into the game.

"They played with a tremendous amount of confidence."

Long completed 20-of-37 pas



for 269 yards and two touchdowns. But he got no support from the Aggie running attack, which was limited to 53 yards on 24 carries.

"When you do that, you don't put yourself in run-pass conflict," Bohl said.

Bohl, like the rest of Nebraska's coaches and players, had reason to smile afterward.

"It makes it easier when you win," Lord said as he broke a silence that would have been broken after practice on the Tuesday before the game had the sports information office not decided it would be better for him to wait until after the game — so print and electronic media would be represented.

"You guys won't be up there booing me," he said as he went to sit before the cameras.

For a brief time, it seemed as if the bad things that have happened never did.

"This is a game we'll enjoy," said Solich. "But we'll put it behind us."

"As good of a win as it was, we'll move on." ■

4TH & 1 INCHES

Notes And Quotes From The Texas A&M Game

NO KELSAY

Senior rush end and co-captain Chris Kelsay made the trip but against didn't suit up because of a hamstring injury suffered early in the McNeese State game.

GAME INJURIES

Starting offensive right guard Wes Cody suffered a leg injury early in the game and was replaced by Junior Tagoa'i, who went the rest of the way. "We consider him a starter. Junior did a hell of a job," offensive line coach Milt Tenopir said. "They all did. I'm proud of them."

Cody was going to try to play in the second half but couldn't push off the leg, said Tenopir.

Rover Lannie Hopkins was knocked unconscious breaking a wedge on the kick-off and had to be helped from the field. Offensive tackle Richie Incognito also left the game late because of an injury.

STRING SNAPPED

Texas A&M had not allowed a player to rush for 100 or more yards in 20 consecutive games. Oklahoma State's Reggie White rushed for 112 yards on 19 carries against the Aggies in 2000. Two Cornhuskers rushed for more than 100 yards. Jammal Lord had 159 and David Horne had 128. The last time A&M allowed two players to rush for 100 yards was in 1999.

Nebraska's Eric Crouch (137) and Dan Alexander (135) did it.

DEFENSIVE KUDOS

Demorrio Williams recorded Nebraska's first sack since the fourth quarter of the Missouri game, pulling down A&M's Dustin Long for a 15-yard loss. Williams was credited with eight tackles, second on the team to cornerback Pat Ricketts, who was involved in 11 tackles and had one of the Cornhuskers' two pass interceptions. Philip Bland, who had the other interception, made seven tackles.

"We just kept playing hard, kept striving," said Williams.

GILLESPIE COMES DOWN

Running backs coach Dave Gillespie has been among the coaches in the press-box during the game, but against Texas A&M, he was on the sideline. His presence helped, according to I-back Dahrran Diedrick, "just the fact that he was there cheering."

ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE

Three games into the season, A&M Coach R.C. Slocum modified his staff, replacing Dino Babers with Kevin Sumlin as offensive coordinator and inserting sophomore Dustin Long at quarterback. Senior Mark Farris had been the starting quarterback for 26 games during his career.

The changes paid off in a big way, based on the Aggies' offensive statistics.

In their first three games, they averaged 286.7 yards per game and 16 points. In the four games since then, prior to the Nebraska game, A&M averaged 479.5 yards and 41.5 points.

The Aggies managed 332 total yards against Nebraska, including just 53 rushing.

In any case, with that as the context, Cornhusker Coach Frank Solich was asked at his weekly news conference if he might consider naming an offensive coordinator at some point.

Solich, like Tom Osborne before him, serves as his own offensive coordinator.

"I've given a lot of things a lot of thought throughout the course of the season," he said. "The fact is that we're not being as productive as we'd like to be offensively or defensively, and the whole thing comes back to me. I'm constantly evaluating and looking at what I can do, what we can do to make this day-by-day and game-by-game what we want it to be, so that we can continue with year-by-year what we want it to be. Nothing is out of the question."

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Osborne was in Lincoln and visited with Solich and his assistants on the Monday before the A&M game. "We talked about several issues," said Solich. "That was really appreciated. I think Coach Osborne understands the game of football. He understands how things can work. To get a pat on the back from him and have some sort of understanding was great for us as a staff."

Osborne endured some difficult times early in his Hall of Fame career, as did his predecessor Bob Devaney. Osborne considered leaving Nebraska for Colorado late in his sixth season (1978) because of fan disaffection, and fans circulated a petition calling for Devaney's firing in 1968, on the heels of a second consecutive 6-4 season. Nebraska won national championships in 1970 and 1971. ■

2002 Schedule

1	Aug. 24	Arizona State (7-2), W 48-10	1-0
2	Aug. 31	Troy State (3-6), W 31-16	2-0
3	Sept. 7	Utah State (2-6), W 44-13	3-0
4	Sept. 14	@ Penn State (5-3), L 40-7	3-1
5	Sept. 28	@ Iowa State (6-3), L 36-14	3-2
6	Oct. 5	McNeese St. (6-1), W 38-14	4-2
7	Oct. 12	Missouri (4-4), W 24-13	5-2
8	Oct. 19	@ Oklahoma St. (3-4), L 24-21	5-3
9	Oct. 26	@ Texas A&M (5-3), W 38-31	6-3
10	Nov. 2	Texas (7-1), 6 p.m., Fox SN	
11	Nov. 9	Kansas (Homecoming) (2-7), TBA	
12	Nov. 16	@ Kansas State (6-2), TBA	
13	Nov. 29	Colorado (6-2), 2:30 p.m., ABC	
	Dec. 7	Big 12 Championship at Houston, Texas, 7 p.m., ABC	

Big 12 at a Glance

	North		All
	Conf.		
Colorado	4	0	6
Iowa State	3	2	6
Kansas State	2	2	6
Nebraska	2	2	6
Missouri	1	3	4
Kansas	0	5	2
	South		
	Conf.		All
Oklahoma	3	0	7
Texas	3	1	7
Texas A&M	2	2	5
Texas Tech	2	2	5
Oklahoma State	1	2	3
Baylor	1	3	3

Saturday, Oct. 26

Nebraska 38, Texas A&M 31
Texas 21, Iowa State 10
Missouri 36, Kansas 12
Kansas State 44, Baylor 10
Colorado 37, Texas Tech 13
Oklahoma, Oklahoma State idle

Saturday, Nov. 2

Texas at Nebraska
Missouri at Iowa State
Kansas State at Kansas
Colorado at Oklahoma
Texas A&M at Oklahoma State
Baylor at Texas Tech

Upcoming Opponents' Schedules

	Texas (7-1)
Aug. 31	North Texas, W 27-0
Sept. 14	@ North Carolina, W 52-21
Sept. 21	Houston, W 41-11
Sept. 28	@ Tulane, W 49-0
Oct. 5	Oklahoma State, W 17-15
Oct. 12	Oklahoma (Dallas), L 35-24
Oct. 19	@ Kansas State, W 17-14
Oct. 26	Iowa State, W 21-10
Nov. 2	@ Nebraska
Nov. 9	Baylor
Nov. 16	@ Texas Tech
Nov. 29	Texas A&M

	Kansas (2-7)
Aug. 31	@ Iowa State, L 45-3
Sept. 7	@ UNLV, L 31-20
Sept. 14	SW Missouri St., W 44-24
Sept. 21	Bowling Green, L 39-16
Sept. 28	@ Tulsa, W 43-33
Oct. 5	@ Baylor, L 35-32
Oct. 12	Colorado, L 53-29
Oct. 19	Texas A&M, L 47-22
Oct. 26	@ Missouri, L 36-12
Nov. 2	Kansas State
Nov. 9	@ Nebraska
Nov. 16	Oklahoma State

Game 10

Texas
Nov. 2

Location: Austin, Texas
Enrollment: 46,610
2002 record: 7-1
Coach: Mack Brown, fifth year
Series: Tied 4-4



6 p.m. (CST), Fox Sports Net
Memorial Stadium, Lincoln, Neb.

Longhorn to Watch

Texas tailback Cedric Benson is coming off a 199-yard, two touch-down rushing effort in the Longhorns' 21-10 victory over Iowa State. It was the third-best rushing performance of his career. He had 213 yards vs. Kansas last season and 208 vs. North Carolina earlier this year. For the season, 6-foot, 205-pound sophomore has 934 yards and seven touchdowns and is averaging 4.6 yards per carry.



Quick Facts

Texas limited Iowa State to 58 yards rushing and dominated time of possession, holding the ball for 20:22 in the second half, including a staggering 11:30 in the fourth quarter.

Senior quarterback Chris Simms picked up his 22nd career victory as a starter, tying Major Applewhite (1998-2001) for fifth place on UT's quarterback victories list. He is 22-5 as a starter. Simms had 130 yards of total offense, giving him 5,473 for his career and moving him into fifth place on UT's career total offense chart.

Sophomore kicker Dusty Mangum has made a school record 72 consecutive extra points.

On Deck

Kansas
Nov. 9

Location: Lawrence, Kan.
Enrollment: 27,407
2002 record: 2-7
Coach: Mark Mangino, 1st year
Series: Nebraska leads 84-21-3



Time TBA
Memorial Stadium, Lincoln, Neb.

Tentative 2 Deeps

NEBRASKA OFFENSE

SE	9	Wilson Thomas***	6-6	215	Sr.
	2	Rose Pilkington	6-0	195	Fr.
LT	51	Richie Incognito	6-3	295	RFr.
	69	Nick Povendo	6-3	300	So.
LG	78	Mike Erickson*	6-4	295	So.
	55	Junior Tagoa'i*	6-2	295	Jr.
C	52	John Garrison***	6-4	290	Sr.
	79	Josh Sewell	6-2	300	Jr.
RG	59	Wes Cody**	6-2	305	Sr.
	55	Junior Tagoa'i*	6-2	295	Jr.
RT	68	Dan Villi Waldrop**	6-5	315	Jr.
	69	Nick Povendo	6-3	300	So.
TE	99	Aaron Golliday***	6-4	290	Sr.
	84	Jon Bowling***	6-3	240	Sr.
QB	10	Jammal Lord**	6-2	210	Jr.
	16	Mike Stuntz*	6-1	200	So.
FB	4	Judd Davies**	6-0	255	Jr.
	45	Steve Kriewald*	5-10	255	So.
IB	30	Dahrran Diedrick***	6-0	225	Sr.
	5	David Horne	6-0	190	Fr.
WB	89	Troy Hassebroek***	6-4	215	Sr.
	81	Ben Cornelsen**	5-10	190	Sr.
PK	26	Josh Brown***	6-2	190	Sr.

NEBRASKA DEFENSE

LR	57	Chris Kelsay***	6-5	255	Sr.
or	88	Trevor Johnson**	6-4	250	Jr.
NT	59	Ryon Bingham*	6-3	280	Jr.
	55	Jon Clanton***	6-2	285	Sr.
DT	94	Patrick Kabongo**	6-6	305	Jr.
	66	Le Kevin Smith	6-2	300	RFr.
RR	98	Demoin Adams***	6-2	260	Sr.
or	88	Trevor Johnson**	6-4	250	Jr.
SLB	43	Scott Shanley***	6-2	240	Sr.
	47	Ira Cooper*	6-2	220	So.
MLB	38	Barrett Ruud*	6-2	240	So.
	54	Chad Sievers	6-3	225	So.
WLB	7	Demorrio Williams	6-1	205	Jr.
or	17	T.J. Hollowell**	6-0	220	Jr.
LCB	3	Fabian Washington	6-0	175	Fr.
	28	Pat Ricketts**	5-11	180	Jr.
FS	21	Philip Bland*	5-11	205	So.
	31	Jerrell Pippens**	6-2	195	Jr.
ROV	14	Daniel Bullocks	6-1	195	RFr.
or	21	Philip Bland*	5-11	205	So.
RCB	5	DeJuan Groce***	5-10	190	Sr.
	1	Lornell McPherson*	5-9	175	So.
P	19	Kyle Larson	6-0	195	Jr.

TEXAS OFFENSE

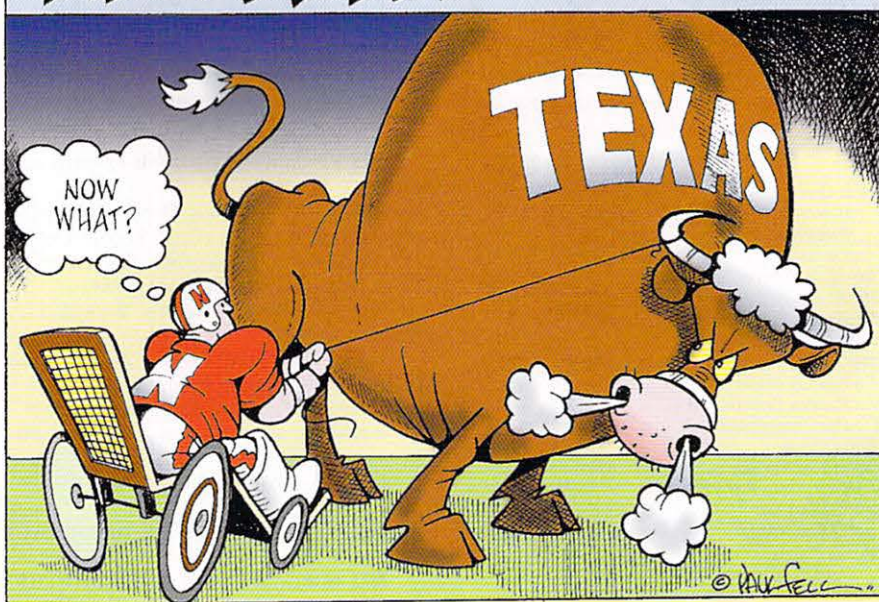
SE	4	Roy Williams**	6-4	210	Jr.
	1	Sloan Thomas**	6-2	200	Jr.
LT	71	Robbie Doane***	6-6	315	Sr.
	79	Alfio Randall-Weasey*	6-6	315	Sr.
LG	61	Tillman Holloway**	6-3	315	Jr.
	54	Trey Bates*	6-5	300	So.
C	52	Jason Glynn*	6-2	275	So.
	72	Will Allen	6-6	297	RFr.
RG	74	Beau Baker***	6-5	280	Sr.
or	76	Derrick Dockery***	6-6	345	Sr.
RT	76	Derrick Dockery***	6-6	345	Sr.
or	73	Jonathan Scott	6-7	297	RFr.
TE	84	Brock Edwards**	6-5	250	Jr.
	16	David Thomas	6-3	220	Fr.
QB	2	Chris Simms***	6-5	225	Sr.
	5	Chance Mock*	6-2	215	So.
TB	32	Cedric Benson*	6-0	205	So.
	3	Selvin Young	6-0	195	Fr.
FB	46	Matt Triessl**	6-0	240	Sr.
	26	Ivan Williams**	6-1	240	Sr.
FL	82	B.J. Johnson**	6-1	200	Jr.
	12	Tony Jeffery*	6-2	175	So.
K	8	Dusty Mangum*	5-11	170	So.

TEXAS DEFENSE

DE	40	Cory Redding***	6-5	270	Sr.
	31	O.J. McClintock**	6-2	260	Jr.
DT	95	Marcus Tubbs**	6-4	305	Jr.
	65	Stevie Lee*	6-4	310	So.
DT	61	Rodrique Wright	6-5	320	Fr.
	65	Stevie Lee*	6-4	310	So.
DE	43	Kalen Thornton**	6-3	270	Jr.
	41	Austin Sandlein	6-3	265	So.
SLB	23	Lee Jackson***	6-3	223	Sr.
	6	Mike Williams	6-4	225	Fr.
MLB	45	Reed Boyd**	6-3	235	Jr.
	26	Eric Hall	6-3	250	RFr.
WLB	11	Derrick Johnson*	6-4	220	So.
	56	Garnet Smith	6-3	220	Fr.
CB	3	Nathan Vasher**	5-11	180	Jr.
	7	Michael Huff	6-1	190	RFr.
SS	7	Michael Huff	6-1	190	RFr.
	8	Cedric Griffin	6-2	190	RFr.
FS	9	Dakari Pearson**	5-10	185	Jr.
	17	Rufus Harris	5-11	190	RFr.
CB	21	Rod Babers***	5-10	187	Sr.
	4	Edorian McCullough	5-11	175	Fr.
P	14	Brian Bradford*	6-2	215	Sr.

THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION

NEBRASKA vs. TEXAS



NOVEMBER 2, 2002

HUSKERS FACE ANOTHER SATURDAY CHALLENGE, THIS TIME TRYING TO TAME THE LONGHORNS!

PICKS

TEXAS AT NEBRASKA

Brian Hill Editor

Texas has loads of talent, but Nebraska finally showed what it is capable of at Texas A&M and should bring renewed confidence to this rematch against the last team to win in Lincoln. The Huskers played through their mistakes against the Aggies. If they can maintain their momentum and keep the mistakes to a minimum, the nation's longest home winning streak will remain intact. **Nebraska 30, Texas 28**

Mike Babcock Contributing Editor

Reason says Texas. But despite all that has happened this season, it's still difficult to accept Nebraska's precipitous

drop from national prominence. The Cornhuskers should be emotionally charged to extend their 26-game home winning streak. Plus, they have the talent to pull off an upset of this magnitude. A victory here would indicate that the slide is only temporary. **Nebraska 31, Texas 30**

Terry Douglass Grand Island Independent Sports Editor

After a rugged two-game road trip, Nebraska returns home to play a highly talented Texas club. Of course, all Big Red fans remember that the 'Horns are the last opponent to win at Memorial Stadium, and so will the Huskers. **Nebraska 28, Texas 24**

BY THE NUMBERS

Nebraska vs. Texas A&M

Oct. 26, 2002 • Kyle Field • College Station, Texas

Score By Quarters

Nebraska	7	7	7	17	—	38
Texas A&M	14	7	10	0	—	31

Team Stats

	NU	TA
First Downs	28	15
Rushing	23	5
Passing	5	9
Penalty	0	1
Rushing Attempts	73	24
Yards Gained Rushing	421	84
Yards Lost Rushing	40	31
Net Yards Rushing	381	53
Net Yards Passing	116	269
Passes Attempted	12	37
Passes Completed	7	20
Had Intercepted	0	2
Total Plays	85	61
Total Net Yards	497	322
Avg. Gain Per Play	5.8	5.3
Fumbles-Lost	4-2	0-0
Penalties-Yards	7-65	6-38
Punts-Yards	3-101	5-165
Avg. Per Punt	33.7	33.0
Punt Returns-Yards	3-50	2-35
Interceptions-Yards	2-(-6)	0-0
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	2-66
Kickoff Returns-Yards	5-105	3-71
Possession Time	33:50	26:10

Scoring

NU — Dahrran Diedrick 12-yard run (Josh Brown kick)
A&M — Terrence Thomas 12-yard blocked punt return (Todd Pegram kick)
A&M — Joe Weber 9-yard pass from Dustin Long (Pegram kick)
NU — David Horne 2-yard run (Brown kick)
A&M — Greg Porter 2-yard pass from Long (Pegram kick)
A&M — Pegram 33-yard field goal
A&M — Byron Jones 66-yard fumble recovery (Pegram kick)
NU — Horne 21-yard run (Brown kick)
NU — Horne 11-yard run (Brown kick)
NU — Horne 6-yard run (Brown kick)
NU — Brown 42-yard field goal
Att. — 81,054
Weather — drizzle
Temp. — 63

Individual Statistics

NEBRASKA

RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Lord, J.	30	159	5.3	41	0
Horne, D.	24	128	5.3	21	4
Diedrick, D.	15	85	5.7	29	1
Davies, J.	3	14	4.7	10	0
Team	1	-5	-5.0	0	0

PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Lord, J.	7-12-0	58.3	116	0

RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Thomas, W.	4	59	14.8	28	0
Pilkington, R.	2	52	26.0	30	0
LeFlore, M.	1	5	5.0	5	0

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Larson, K.	2	101	50.5	56
Team	1	0	0.0	0

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Groce, D.	3	50	16.7	21	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	5	105	21.0	26	0

DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Ricketts, P.	4	7	11	0	1-(-6)	0
Williams, D.	2	6	8	1-15	0	1-15
Bland, P.	1	6	7	.5-1	1-0	0
Washington, F.	4	2	6	0	0	0
Shanle, S.	2	4	6	0	0	0
Clanton, J.	0	4	4	.5-3	0	0
Groce, D.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Hollowell, T.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Johnson, T.	0	3	3	0	0	0
Adams, D.	0	3	3	.5-3	0	0
Bullocks, D.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Pippens, J.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Smith, J.	1	1	2	1/5-4	0	.5-2
Kabongo, P.	0	2	2	.5-1	0	0
Rud, B.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Bullocks, J.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Simmons, M.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Adams, T.	0	1	1	.5-1	0	.5-1
Ringenberg, K.	0	1	1	0	0	0

TEXAS A&M

RUSHING LEADERS

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Johnson, B.	1	17	17.0	17	0
Farmer, D.	9	16	1.8	9	0
Long, D.	7	13	1.9	20	0
Weber, J.	5	6	1.2	4	0

PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Long, D.	20-37-2	54.1	269	2

RECEIVING LEADERS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Murphy, T.	5	75	15.0	31	0
Porter, G.	4	59	14.8	35	1
Taylor, J.	3	59	19.7	23	0
Weber, J.	3	37	12.3	25	1
Johnson, B.	3	28	9.3	11	0

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Scates, C.	5	165	33.0	41

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Squillante, A.	1	13	13.0	13	0
Johnson, B.	1	10	10.0	10	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Johnson, B.	3	71	23.7	37	0

DEFENSE LEADERS

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Appel, J.	4	9	13	0	0	0
Gamble, B.	1	12	13	0	0	0
Smith, L.	2	9	11	1.5-6	0	0
Kiel, T.	5	5	10	1-8	0	0
Morris, J.	3	7	10	0	0	0
Pennington, J.	2	6	8	1-4	0	0
Davis, S.	4	3	7	1-3	0	0
Jasmin, M.	3	4	7	.5-1	0	0
Jones, B.	2	5	7	0	0	0
Ross, D.	2	5	7	1-1	0	0
Hunnicut, J.	1	4	5	.5-1	0	0
Weston, S.	0	5	5	0	0	0
Webb, R.	2	2	4	0	0	0
Losada, N.	0	4	4	0	0	0
Jolly, J.	1	2	3	.5-0	0	0
Douglas, M.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Wright, A.	1	1	2	0	0	0
McDaniel, A.	1	1	2	0	0	0



Nebraska Coach Frank Solich has a word with the officials in the fourth quarter.

2002 SEASON STATS

RUSHING LEADERS

Name	G	Att.	Yds.	YPG	TD
Lord, J.	9	156	921	102.3	7
Diedrick, D.	9	123	570	63.3	4
Horne, D.	4	80	422	105.5	6
Ross, C.	9	30	167	18.6	2
Davies, J.	7	29	106	11.8	4
LeFlore, M.	7	2	93	13.3	1
Davis, J.	7	13	89	11.1	0
Simmons, M.	8	9	43	5.4	0
Collins, T.	3	14	39	13.0	0
Stuntz, M.	5	11	19	3.8	0
Kriewald, S.	9	6	16	1.7	0

PASSING LEADERS

Name	G	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Lord, J.	9	62-122-6	50.8	859	6
Stuntz, M.	5	9-22-0	40.9	97	0

RECEIVING LEADERS

Name	G	No.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Thomas, W.	9	23	238	10.3	26.4	2
Pilkington, R.	9	12	268	22.3	29.8	1
Cornelsen, B.	9	6	81	13.5	9.0	0
Davis, J.	8	6	42	7.0	5.2	0
Hassebroek, T.	9	5	54	10.8	6.0	1
Ross, C.	8	5	39	7.8	4.8	0
Bowling, J.	8	3	84	28.0	10.5	0
Diedrick, D.	9	3	16	5.3	1.7	0
Golliday, A.	8	2	17	8.5	2.1	1
Herian, M.	7	2	77	38.5	11.0	1
Ringenberg, K.	8	1	25	25.0	3.1	0
Simmons, M.	8	1	18	18.0	2.2	0

FIELD GOALS

Name	G	Att.	Good	Long
Brown, J.	9	9	7	44

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Larson, K.	42	1,791	42.6	71

PUNT RETURN LEADER

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Groce, D.	24	381	15.9	89	3

KICKOFF RETURN LEADER

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	23	526	22.9	42	0

DEFENSIVE LEADERS

Name	G	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	S/Yds.
Bland, P.	9	24	27	51	4.5-13	0	0
Shanle, S.	9	22	29	51	4-14	0	1-10
Williams, D.	9	22	29	51	2-16	0	1-15
Ricketts, P.	9	26	22	48	1-4	2-5	0
Rud, B.	9	20	26	46	6-18	0	1-8
Hollowell, T.	9	14	26	40	2-6	0	1-5
Kabongo, P.	8	5	34	39	7.5-23	0	2-17

TEAM STATISTICS

Total Offensive Yards	3,468	3,098				
Plays	628	641				
Average Per Play	5.5	4.8				
Average Per Game	385.3	344.2				
Net Rushing Yards	2,512	1,183				
Attempts	483	342				
TDs Rushing	24	13				
Net Passing Yards	956	1,915				
Completions	71	151				
Average Per Pass	6.6	6.3				
Average Per Catch	13.5	12.7				
Average Per Game	106.2	212.8				
TDs Passing	6	7				
Sacks By-Yards	19-146	13-91				
Fumbles-Lost	23-11	10-3				
Penalties-Yards	53-470	47-328				
Scoring	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	OT	TOT
NU	48	83	56	78	0	265
Opponents	37	52	65	43	0	197

ON SUNDAY
THE UNIFORM SAYS GREEN BAY.

ON SATURDAY
THE HEART SAYS HUSKERS.



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TEAM

NEBRASKA
HUSKERS

NEBRASKA
HUSKERS

NEBRASKA
HUSKERS

NEBRASKA
HUSKERS

AHMAN GREEN

Early Exposure

*West Virginia
high school
power sparked
football interest
for Darlington*

By Mike Babcock

Stonewall Jackson High School was only a couple of blocks from where George Darlington grew up in Charleston, W.V., and it was a perennial state power in football.

Its teams were "exceptionally good," and played games outside the state as well as in. "They were exciting," Darlington said. "And I became very enamored with football."

He was only 6- or 7-years-old at the time. But his interest never dissipated.

It did waver, though only briefly. After the Soviet Union launched the Sputnik I satellite in October of 1957, he considered becoming an engineer to help in the space race.

But "I was not a particularly good math student," he said.

So he decided to major in history and physical education at Rutgers University, with plans to teach and coach. He was determined to be involved in athletics, at the high school level.

At the time, "I had no desire to coach in college," he said.

Darlington went to Rutgers to play football, persuaded to do so by Bob Simms, who had gone from Charleston to Rutgers to the National Football League for three seasons.

Darlington turned down the offer of a partial scholarship from Marshall University to attend Rutgers, which participated in the first football game, on Nov. 6, 1869,

**GEORGE
DARLINGTON**

**Secondary
Coach**

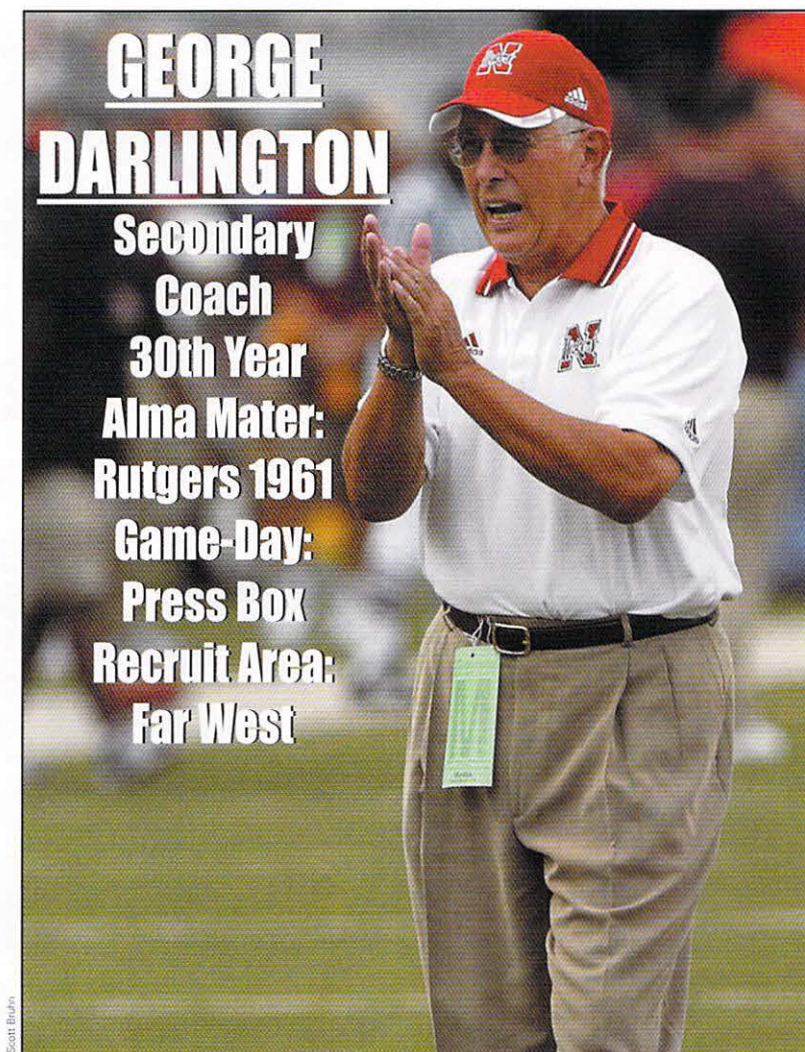
30th Year

**Alma Mater:
Rutgers 1961**

Game-Day:

Press Box

**Recruit Area:
Far West**



against Princeton. His ROTC class at Rutgers met in a portable classroom on the site of that historic game — won by Rutgers, 6-4.

Darlington and his parents drove to the campus in New Brunswick, N.J., which seemed separated from Charleston by more than distance. They were like "country bumpkins," he said, too shy to ask for directions to the football stadium. "I felt I was in a completely different world."

He also played lacrosse at Rutgers, earning third-team All-America recognition his senior year.

Though he preferred football, "I got more honors in lacrosse," he said.

He was the best lacrosse player to come out of West Virginia at the time because "I was the only one," he said. "The first lacrosse game I ever saw I played in."

Darlington played lacrosse because of football. There was no spring practice, so players were encouraged to participate in another sport, baseball, track and field or lacrosse.

He had been a distance runner in high school but didn't want to lose

weight running, so he decided to try lacrosse, which "had more of a tie-in to football because of the contact," he said.

"Had we had spring football, I would never have played lacrosse."

If not for lacrosse, he might not have coached football above the high school level.

The coach of an all-star lacrosse game in which he played, Bill McKinley, was moving from Williams College to Lebanon Valley, Pa., College to become the athletic director and head football coach, and McKinley was interested in hiring him as a football assistant. So after two years as a coach at Johnson Regional High School in Clark, N.J., Darlington went to Lebanon Valley.

Before moving up, however, he learned a lot about football at Johnson Regional High. He and a handful of other area high school coaches met to exchange ideas and analyze film of college teams. College recruiters regularly visited the area and brought along film. Because letter-of-intent signing dates were much later in the year, they

would even spend time with the young high school coaches.

The coaches also contacted schools directly for film, and "literally, two-thirds of the major colleges east of the Mississippi" would send it, Darlington said. "We would have our 'graduate work' on football in somebody's basement or apartment once a week. It was really helpful."

After that two-year "graduate" course, he spent four years at Lebanon Valley as an assistant coach in track as well as football, then moved on to Dartmouth, where he was an assistant football coach and the head wrestling coach, "the worst-ever in the sport's history," he said.

Dartmouth offered an idyllic setting, and "my wife cried like a baby when we left," said Darlington. But coaching requires moving, and "we never expected to live anywhere very long."

He left Dartmouth after only one year for a job on Joe McMullen's staff at San Jose State in 1969. McMullen lasted less than two seasons before being fired and replaced by Dewey King.

Darlington coordinated the defense and coached the defensive line under King.

After four years at San Jose State, the Darlington family was forced to pack up and move again, this time because King and all of his assistants were fired following a 4-7 season.

The firing was fortuitous for Darlington. He met Tom Osborne at a coaching convention in 1973, when Osborne was filling out his staff after succeeding Bob Devaney as Nebraska's coach.

He began as the defensive ends coach and moved to the secondary in 1986.

Darlington is the dean of Big 12 football coaches, participating in more than 300 victories during his 30 seasons at Nebraska.

Coach Frank Solich presented him the game ball and a plaque acknowledging that accomplishment following the Utah State game earlier this season.

Darlington knew when he was a youngster that he wanted to coach.

And "I never out-grew a childhood desire," he said. ■

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She's Back

Former Husker standout Nepo returns to train, help team as volunteer coach

By Todd Henrichs

In Fiona Nepo's native Hawaii, volleyball is everywhere.

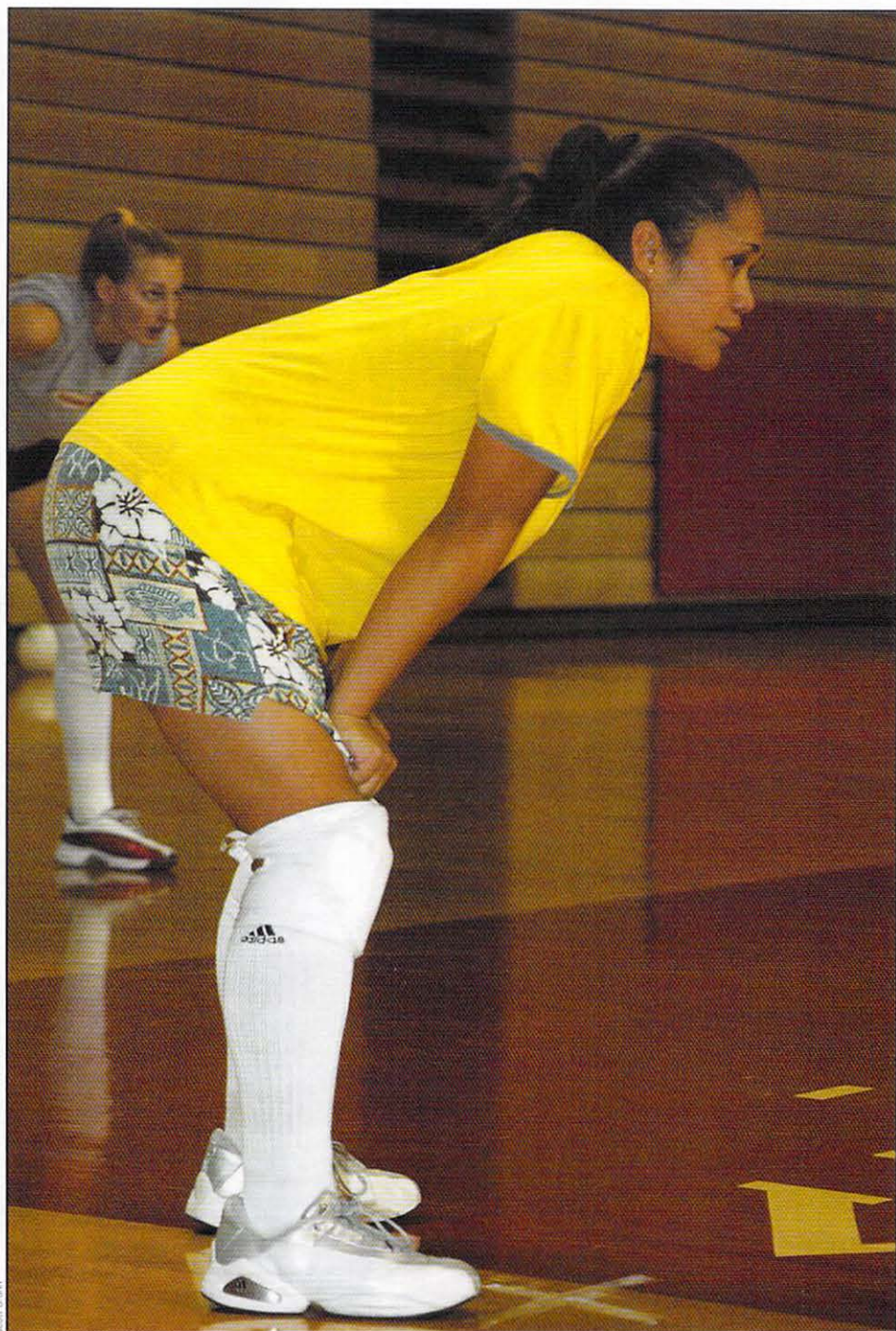
The islanders play competitive pick-up games in the gyms, on the beaches, and just about any other open space where there's room to plop down a net. The following for the powerful Rainbow Wahine of the University of Hawaii is as large and intense as it gets anywhere in collegiate sports nationwide.

For almost a year and a half, Nepo tried to dodge all things volleyball related. A stay-at-home mom with two kids, it only brought back thoughts of what might have been.

Nepo left Nebraska a three-time All-American and a likely bet to join the national team. But parenthood intervened in 1999, and until last March, any thought of playing again was tempered by the favorite bedtime stories of her two sons, Savion and Sylus.

"Volleyball had to be on hold," Nepo said. "When I had Savion, I kind of got in the whole excitement of being a mom. After I had Sylus, I wanted to try and get back into things, but it just wasn't the time. It just wasn't going to work out."

Nepo recalled those thoughts recently seated in a chair positioned strategically to absorb whatever rays of sunshine streamed through the windows of the Nebraska volleyball



Fiona Nepo earned first-team All-America honors her sophomore and senior seasons. Nebraska was 88-13 with Nepo in the starting lineup.

offices on a typical fall afternoon.

Volleyball had returned to Nepo's life, not in Hawaii, but in her adopted home state. As Nepo prepares for

a tryout with the national team, something she realized she had to do or might regret for a lifetime, she is training and helping this year's

Huskers as a volunteer assistant coach.

Nepo and Nebraska, it seems, are still a perfect match.

"It'd be like having Eric Crouch, or maybe Tommie Frazier, coming back," said Nebraska Coach John Cook. "It's somebody that has been there and knows what it takes.

"I think it's a great opportunity for Fiona to continue to pursue her dreams, and it's a great opportunity for Nebraska volleyball to have her around."

One in a long line of highly accomplished setters, Nepo is considered perhaps the greatest quarterback in Nebraska volleyball history. She led NU to an 88-13 record as a starter and remains the school's all-time leader in assists.

She played in three final fours in her career, her impact felt even as a freshman when NU won its first national championship in 1995.

Nepo remains one of the most popular Huskers ever, obvious from the loud ovation she receives when introduced prior to each home match at the Coliseum.

The familiar smile is always there, even though deep inside Nepo struggles being away from her two young sons.

"It's hard. Very hard," Nepo said. Savion, who just turned 3, is with his father in Hawaii, and Sylus is staying with Nepo's parents for the two months she'll be away.

Nepo didn't resume training until after she played in a tournament last March.

At age 25, she would like to move a little faster, "but I'm surprised I can even still do it," Nepo said. At Nebraska, she is in the weight room training and practices every day against the Huskers' top unit.

Since she was young and growing up in Honolulu, Nepo says she dreamed of playing for the national team. Oddly enough, the current U.S. setter with the most international experience is Robyn Ah Mow, someone Nepo has known since middle school.

Before deciding to give it a shot, Nepo sought advice from Ah Mow as well as former Husker teammate Nancy Metcalf, who has the same

goal of making the 2004 Olympic team.

"That's what I'm going off of," Nepo said. "It started off as me wanting some kind of closure, but now it's opening up some doors.

"I'll try out and whatever way that goes, I'll go from there. If it doesn't work out, I'll try and play overseas, try out for the professional league here if they expand, maybe even try coaching."

Though inexperienced in that area, Nepo hasn't been shy to try out her coaching skills on this year's Huskers. After just one practice with the team, she already knew what was missing.

The present-day Huskers are immensely talented but maybe could loosen up a bit.

Nepo immediately set out to change that. Besides a skill for setting a volleyball, she has a knack that few others possess. Her easy-going, giving nature rubs off on anyone who knows her.

"They need some smiles once in a while," she said. "We need to liven things up a little bit." ■

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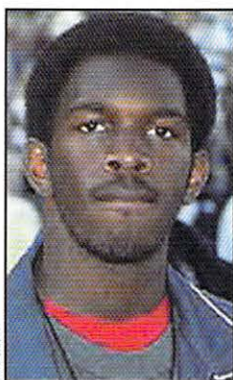
*Huskers pursue
a handful of
nation's top
I-back prospects*

By Doug Horwich

Although Nebraska is a program that has traditionally relied on its running backs for the bulk of its offensive production, the team has something of a log-jam at the position this year, with seven I-backs on scholarship going into the season.

The recent departure of senior Thunder Collins lowers that number to six for the remainder of the year, not including junior DeAntae Grixby, who was moved to fullback prior to the start of the season.

Five I-backs are projected to be on the active roster next season. However, the recent promotion of true freshman David Horne to the



Running back Jerome Jackson of Saginaw, Mich., has Nebraska at the top of his list, along with Michigan, Michigan State and Purdue.

No. 2 position has changed the equation, as the team now has three freshman I-backs playing this year instead of two. Horne has played well enough thus far to establish himself as the likely successor to Dahrran Diedrick, which could potentially have ramifications on the players behind him.

The Husker staff would like to sign another I-back this year to add to the mix but has taken a cautious approach in offering players thus far.

One player high on Nebraska's list is Marcus Woods (5-foot-8, 180 pounds, 4.4 40-yard dash) from

Harrison High School in Farmington Hills, Mich. Woods visited Lincoln the weekend of the Missouri game and was hosted by Horne.

"It was a good visit," Woods said. "I had a lot of fun, and it was an exciting game. I've been there once before, but I took another tour and hung out with some people. It was pretty much free to me for whatever I wanted to do."

The trip to Nebraska left a lasting impression on Woods.

"I'd give the visit a nine on a scale of 1-10," he said. "I like the players and coaches. They are all really friendly. They told me that the way you see Coach Solich on television is the way he is in the real world. That is very encouraging that he is the same person no matter where he is."

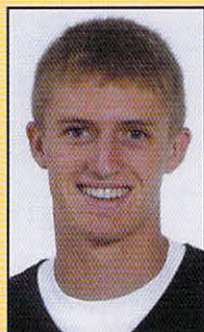
Woods has also taken notice of the fact that his recruiting host led the team in carries against Missouri as a true freshman.

"I love the Nebraska coaches, facilities, and the players," he said. "I like the fact that they aren't afraid to play freshmen. The best player will play there regardless. The decisions

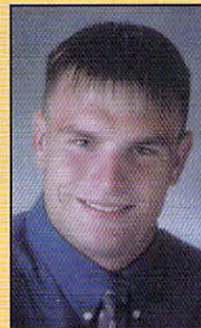
Nebraska Commitments for 2003

Player	Hometown (school)	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.
Greg Austin	Cypress, Texas	6-2	275	OL
Andy Birkel	Lincoln (Southeast), Neb.	6-3	180	WR
Steve Craver	Hurst, Texas	6-2	195	DB/LB
Josh Mueller	Columbus (Lakeview), Neb.	6-7	250	TE
*Trevor Neeman	Lincoln (Southeast), Neb.	6-3	225	TE/DE
*Kade Pittman	North Platte, Neb.	6-0	190	RB/DB
Bo Ruud	Lincoln (Southeast), Neb.	6-3	210	LB
Brandon Teamer	Omaha (Central), Neb.	6-5	256	DE

*scheduled to enter school in the fall of 2002 as part-time students and receive scholarships in January 2003.



Andy Birkel



Josh Mueller

are not made on politics. They will have the best players playing. Coach Dan Young is recruiting me and could be the funniest guy I have ever met. He's just real funny."

Woods currently lists Nebraska and Michigan State as top choices, but he is also considering Bowling Green. He's scheduled to visit Michigan State in mid-December, and could have a decision made by that time. The home-state Spartans will be difficult to beat for Woods' signature, but Nebraska is very much in the picture for this top prospect.

Another Michigan player receiving attention from the Husker coaching staff is Jerome Jackson (6-0, 195, 4.5) from Saginaw High School in Saginaw, Mich.

Nebraska is the only school outside of the Big 10 region that currently has Jackson's attention, and he has the Huskers at the top of his list, along with Michigan, Michigan State and Purdue.

One element of the Husker program that appeals to Jackson is the team's run-dominated offense.

"They're a running school," he said. "That's a big thing. They have a lot of good tradition. Their offensive line coach visited at my school."

Jackson is dominating for Saginaw High, running for more than 100 yards in each of his first five games. During that span, he scored 11 touchdowns and averaged just more than 8 yards per carry. Jackson has also registered 12 receptions for 40 yards.

Jackson already has visited Purdue and is waiting for a call from the Husker staff to schedule an official visit to Lincoln.

One player high on the list of a number of Pac-10 teams who has not yet been offered by the Husker staff is Cornell Johnson (6-1, 210, 4.55) from Desert Pines High School in Las Vegas, Nev.

Johnson attended Nebraska's summer camper prior to his junior and senior seasons in high school and could receive an offer from the Huskers in the near future.

"I went to the (Nebraska) camp last year, and Coach Darlington wanted me to go again this year," Johnson said. "He said that they are looking at me. My athletic director is from Nebraska and a friend of Coach Darlington. She encouraged me to go

Nebraska Looks to the Southeast

By Rick Shaw

Over the past quarter century, Nebraska has managed to pull several blue-chippers out of the southeastern portion of the United States.

Tommie Frazier (Florida), Neil Smith (Louisiana) and others have helped the Huskers contend for conference and national championships during that time period.

Nebraska is trying, once again, to make inroads down south. Last year, Fabian Washington (Florida) and Jemayel Phillips (Louisiana) were key signees in the Husker recruiting class. Husker coaches are working feverishly this fall to add a couple more southern players to their future roster.

— Donnell Livingston of Sarasota High in Sarasota, Fla., is a cat-quick defensive line prospect who is drawing the attention of Husker coaches. In the first five games this season, the 6-foot-3, 296-pound defensive tackle tallied more than 20 tackles and seven sacks.

Livingston has already had offers from North Carolina and Maryland and is being contacted regularly by some of college football's other heavy hitters, including Florida State, Miami, Michigan, and Nebraska. He has scheduled a Dec. 13 visit to Lincoln.

"Nebraska is always good," Livingston said. "They have one of the best strength and conditioning programs in the country. They have good academic support. I'm real interested in them. I can't wait until my visit there in December."

— Another prospect from the Sunshine State who will be making his way to Nebraska during December is Mike Jenkins. The 6-1, 180-pound cornerback/safety prospect from Southeast High in Bradenton, Fla., already has scholarship offers from Iowa, Iowa State, Indiana, Auburn, Pittsburgh, and Central Florida and is hoping that Nebraska follows suit soon.

"I'll be taking my first recruiting visit to Nebraska on Dec. 6," Jenkins said. "I don't know much about them yet. I just want to take a visit up there to see what it's like. I just want to get to know what their team is like."

Jenkins is a swift and fluid athlete who runs a consistent 4.4-second 40-yard dash. He was named to the all-county team as a defensive back as a junior, when he recorded more than 120 tackles.

— Brett Byford of Hartselle High in Hartselle, Ala., is one of the top offensive line prospects in the south. The 6-4, 290-pound guard has scholarship offers from Nebraska, Clemson, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Southern Miss, Oklahoma State, Vanderbilt, Georgia Tech, and others. The Huskers may be the odds on favorite to win the battle for Byford's signature in February because of the big man's positive experience at the Nebraska summer camp last June.

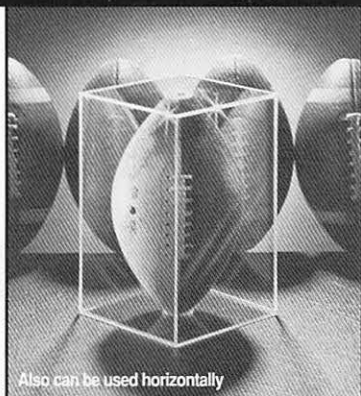
"It was incredible," Byford said. "The facilities were nice, but the biggest thing was the coaches. I loved them. I liked Lincoln a lot, too. It wasn't too big . . . and I like that."

"Nebraska's losses this year don't bother me at all. I want to win wherever I go . . . but more than anything, I want to follow God's will. There is a lot I could accomplish for the Lord up in Lincoln. They'll be back anyway. They have a great program. This is just a down year for them." ■

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up there again, too.

"Nebraska is really nice. The campus is nice, and the camp is great. Coach Darlington — he's a funny man. We've become pretty close the last two years since I've been going up there. Their weight room has got to be the best in the country, and their facilities — I don't think you can do any better."

Johnson also caught the attention of the Husker staff with impressive athletic workouts. "I had the highest performance index at my session of camp," he said. "I scored 2,006 points on the Performance Index. I ran a 4.6-second electronic 40 and turned in a 30-inch vertical leap. I also had a really good score in the pro agility run."

"Coach Solich talked to me at the end of camp and told me that I was a great kid. He also said that they'd be watching me this year and hope to be offering me a full-ride scholarship."

Johnson dominated as a junior last year, rushing for 1,935 yards and scoring 36 touchdowns. His performance won him a place on the Nevada All-State team. He also earned academic all-state honors with a 3.0 cumulative GPA.

Johnson has described himself as an Eddie George type of back. He said his greatest strength as a runner is knowing how the defense will react to his every move. Johnson considers himself very good at reading his blocks.

"I'm a pretty balanced running back," he said. "I have good speed and good power."

Johnson also excelled on the track earlier in the year, finishing with the second-fastest 100-meter dash time in the city of Las Vegas.

"I ran a 10.5 second electronic last year," Johnson said. "I didn't get a chance to show what I could do at State because I pulled my hamstring in the 4x100 race. I didn't get a chance to run the open 100."

Johnson said he will also be looking closely at the engineering departments of his favorite schools.

"Education is most important to me," he said. "I want to be an engineer. Football isn't always going to be there for me."

But he does give it all he's got.

"Wherever I go, I'll play every down and give the coaches 100 percent effort." ■

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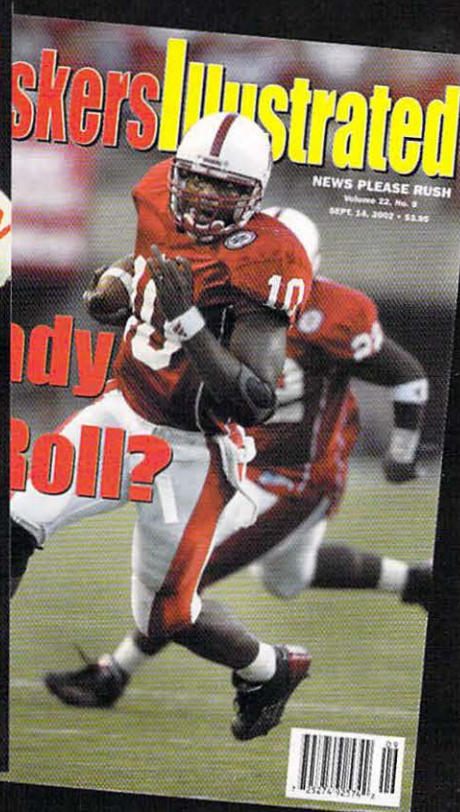
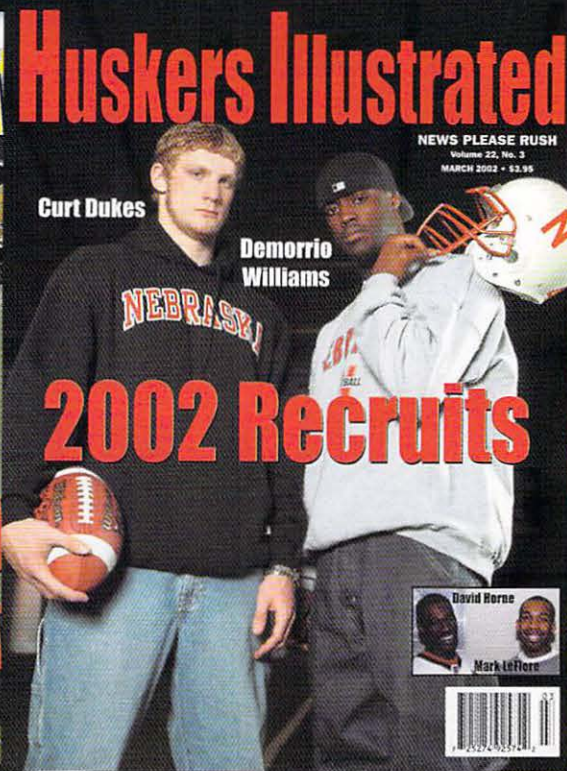
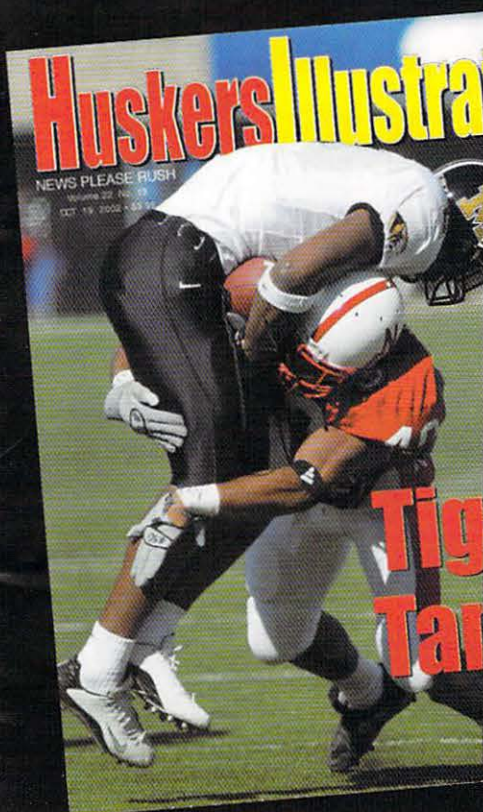
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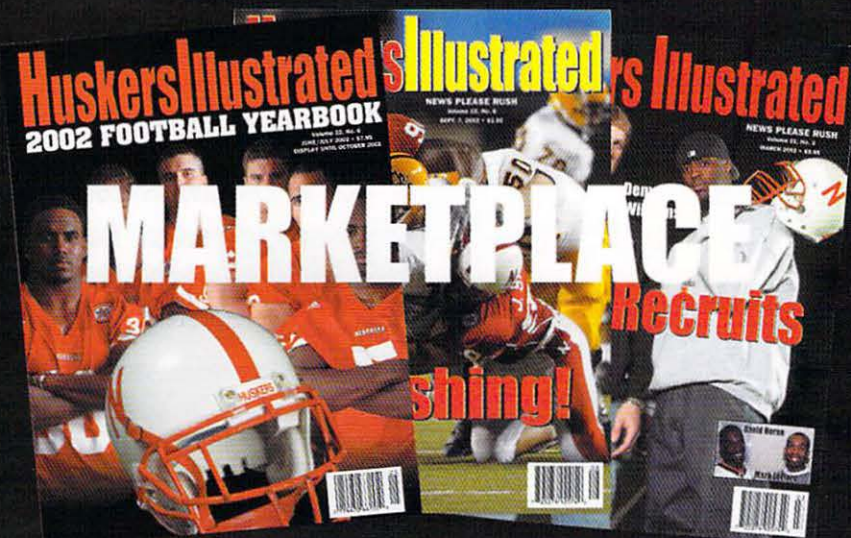
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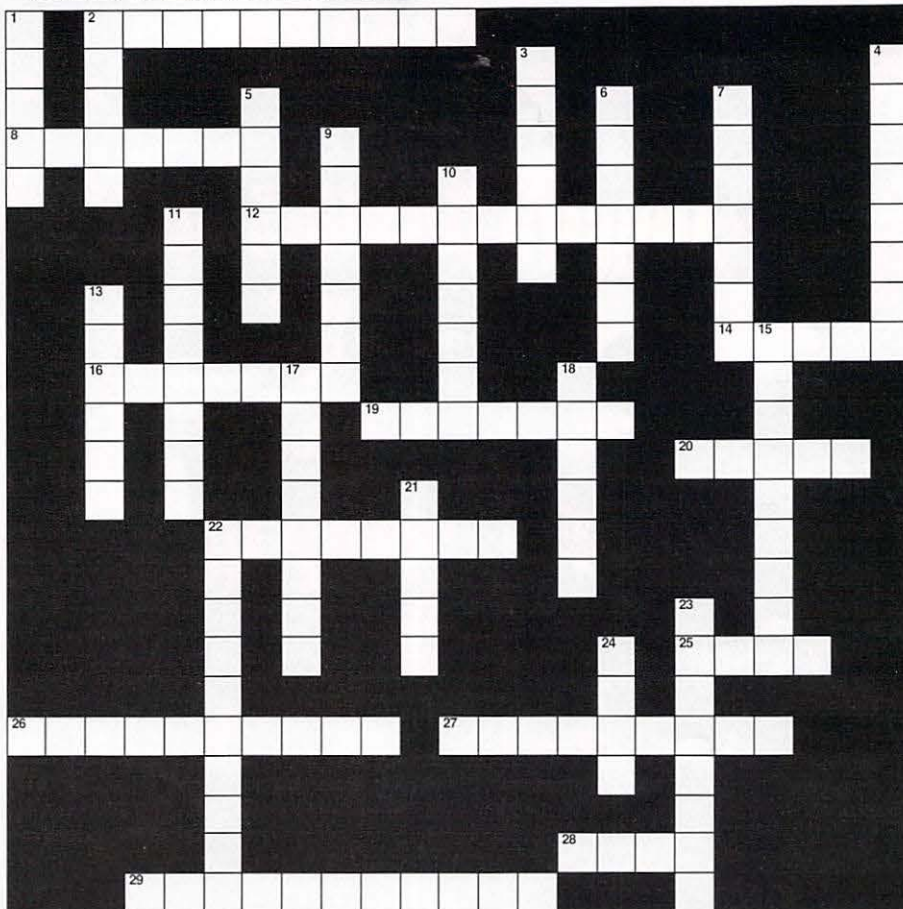
CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 2 NU's No. 89
- 8 Kansas head coach
- 12 Defeated NU for first time since 1961
- 14 Texas quarterback
- 16 1992 Outland Trophy winner
- 19 David Horne's high school in Omaha
- 20 Texas head coach
- 22 Ex-NU defensive back now with Kansas City Chiefs
- 25 NU cornerback missing season with knee injury
- 26 Dean of NU coaching staff
- 27 Texas nickname
- 28 NU quarterback coach
- 29 NU's Nov. 16 opponent

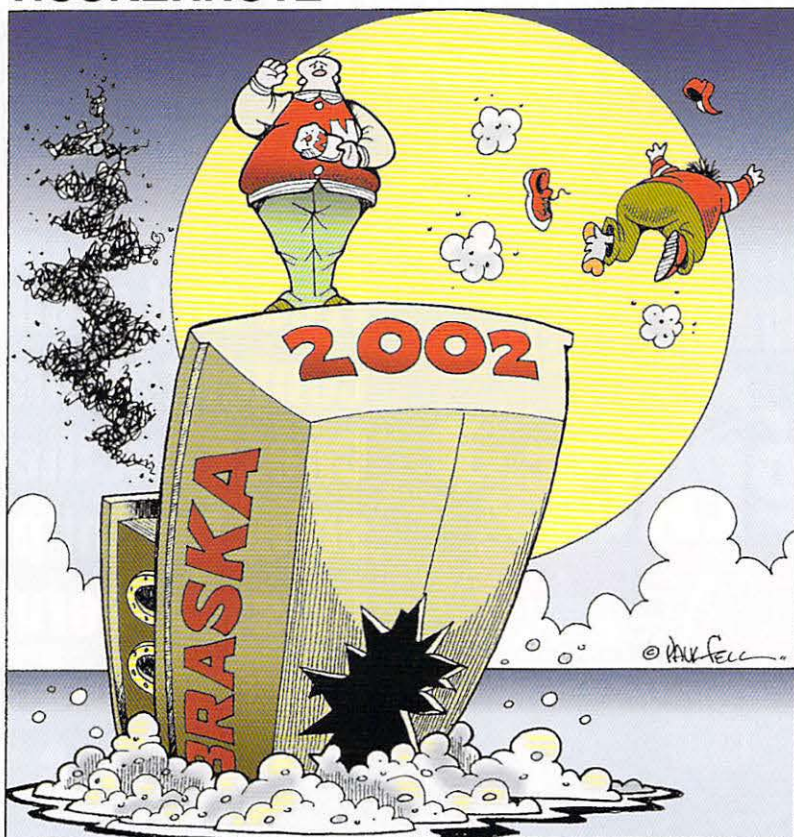
DOWN

- 1 NU's No. 98
- 2 NU's leading rusher vs. Oklahoma St.
- 3 NU true freshman tight end
- 4 NU's head coach in 1961
- 5 Ex-NU guard now with San Diego Chargers
- 6 1997 Lombardi Award winner
- 7 1993 Butkus Award winner
- 9 I-back who recently left NU team
- 10 NU's No. 88
- 11 NU's No. 99
- 13 Texas campus location
- 15 NU's leader in pancake blocks
- 17 Scored NU's first TD vs. Oklahoma State
- 18 1997 Outland Trophy winner
- 21 Demorrio Williams' home state
- 22 NU true freshman cornerback
- 23 Ex-NU defensive lineman now with Oakland Raiders
- 24 NU defensive coordinator



Answers in Nov. 9 issue

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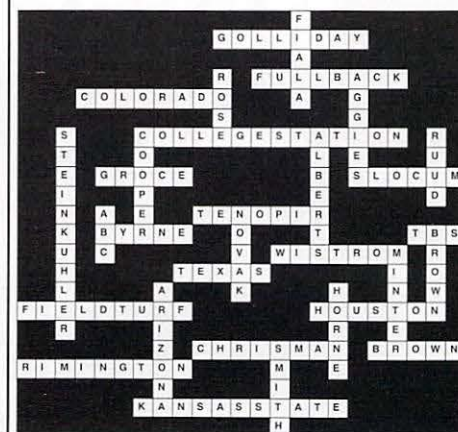
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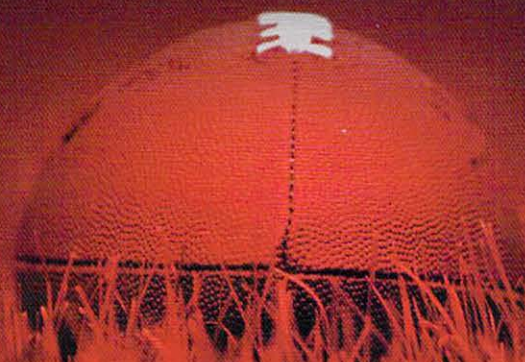
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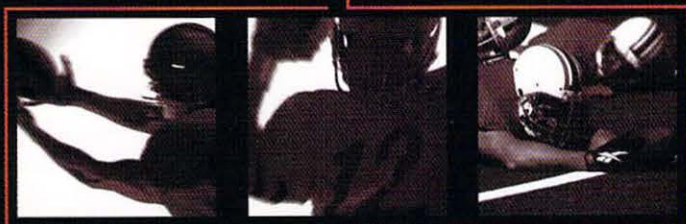
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Leading rusher Lord praises offensive line, I-backs



Mike BABCOCK

Lord said.

One of those men is a freshman, the other a senior. And as of the Tuesday before the Cornhuskers' 38-31 victory against Texas A&M, they shared the No. 1 I-back's job.

Even though Diedrick was listed first on the depth chart, as he has been all season, "in my mind and Coach (Dave) Gillespie's mind, we see them as co-No. 1's," Coach Frank Solich said during his weekly teleconference. "There are going to be snaps for both of them (against A&M)".

Diedrick would provide strength inside, he said. And Horne could make big plays.

"The bottom line is, we're going to need both of them to make it work," said Solich.

Four days later, the wisdom of Solich's words was indisputable.

Horne rushed for 128 yards and four touchdowns, Diedrick for 85 yards and one touchdown.

"We feel good," Diedrick said. "We got it done."

Even though the leading rusher in the Big 12 in 2001 still hasn't reached 100 yards rushing in a game this season, he was a significant factor against A&M, providing a powerful counterpoint to the breakaway potential of Horne, who has established himself as the I-back of the future — as well as the present.

Diedrick can take satisfaction in that. Even though the two play the same position, Diedrick has "been kind of a mentor, I guess you could say," Horne said early in the week. "At practice, even during the games, he goes over little things I can look forward to on the next play, the next series."

Diedrick also pushes him to "work harder in practice," he said.

Horne, who didn't play in the first five games because it appeared he would be redshirted, said he doesn't mind sharing the top job with Diedrick. Quite the contrary.

"That's a big improvement, going from No. 2 to No. 1," he said. "It means you're going to get in more, you're going to get more carries than usual. So I feel it's a big step."

Horne carried 24 times against the Aggies, the same number he had the week before against Oklahoma State and second to Lord's 30, while Diedrick carried 15 times.

Lord's 30 carries were a school record for a quarterback. Eric Crouch previously held the record, 27 against Kansas State in 1999. (Lord has a team-leading 921 yards rushing for the season.)

Horne might not be ready to carry more than he did against Texas A&M. "I'm taking a big pounding every week," he said. "It's taking its toll on me in practice and during the week. But I'm holding up pretty good, I think. I'm trying to put on a few pounds every chance I get."

He won't get many chances to do that during the season, of course. But in the off-season, he's looking to add to his 190 pounds, "just bulking up, being more ready," he said.

"It's a big difference going against high school players or college players. It's a big difference. Everybody's way bigger than you. They come at you more physical, and they hit harder. They're faster. Everything is like 10 times faster than it was in high school. You've got to get used to that."

Horne's goal is to weigh as much as 205 pounds next season, without losing speed. That's among the things he brings to the position, he said, plus "I feel I have a little bit more elusiveness."

Even though he has played in only four games, Horne already ranks seventh all-time among freshman rushers at Nebraska with 422 yards and six touchdowns.

Solich was asked on Tuesday if he wished he had taken Horne out of a redshirt earlier.

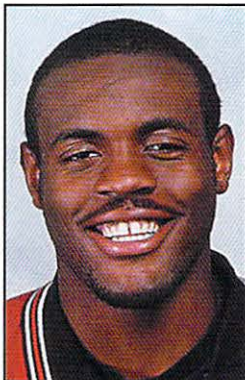
He wished a lot of things, Solich said. Hindsight is 20-20.

"We were in a process of trying to find a guy that would give us what David is giving us right now," he said. "There was one thing after another that transpired as we went through a series of I-backs, trying to make sure that we had the best guy ready to go."

After four games, it seems clear that Horne is the best guy for the job, in combination with Diedrick.

"David Horne is a man in that backfield," Lord said, reiterating his point.

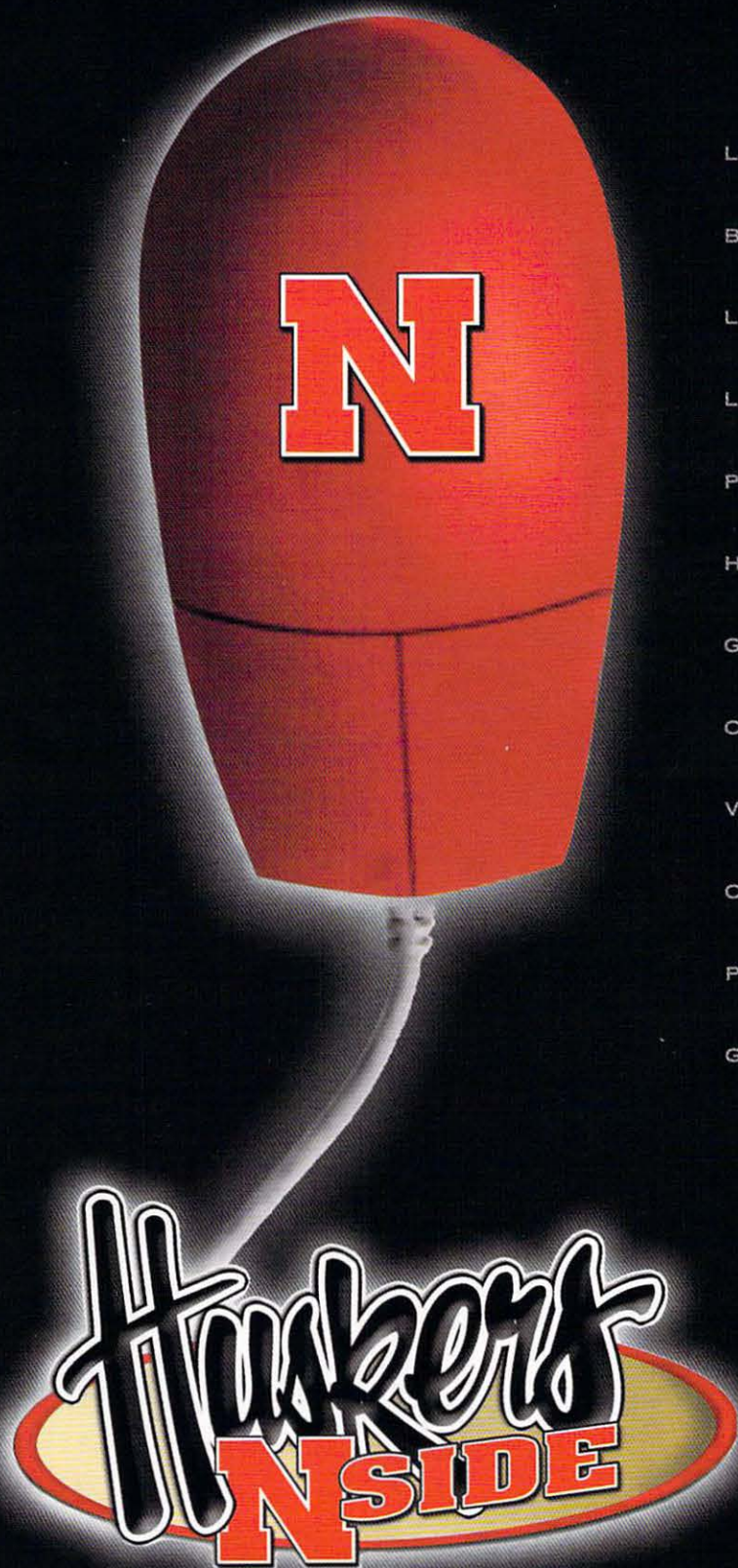
"He runs hard and has the speed to break outside." ■



Jammal Lord has rushed for a team-leading 921 yards.

Mike Babcock is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for more than 20 years. Mike can be reached at MumblyDog@aol.com or P.O. Box 6782, Lincoln, NE 68506.

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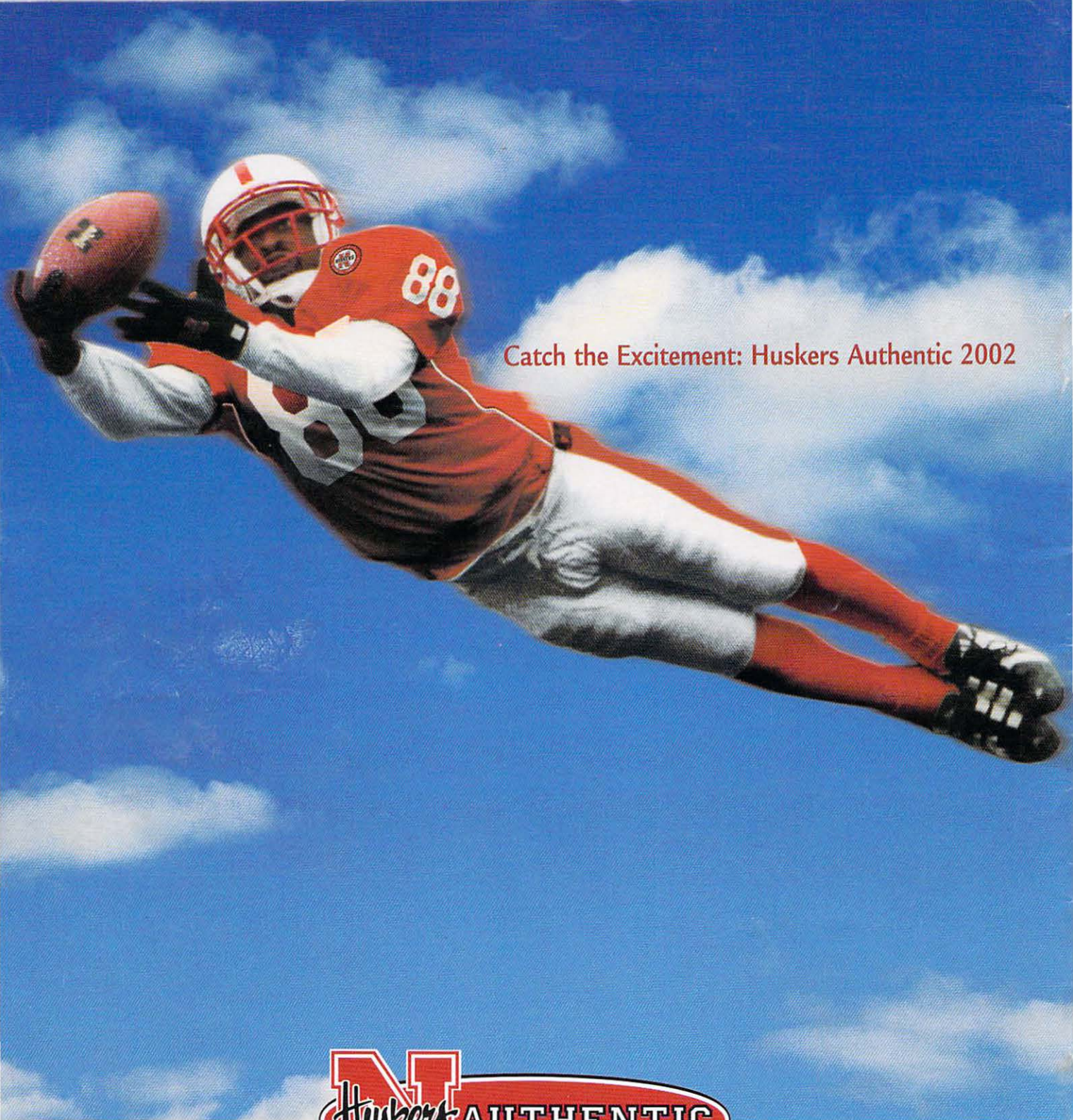
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